

Curator, Allen Memorial Art Museum

Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, Ohio USA

Application deadline: Nov 15, 2021

Andria Derstine, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College

ELLEN JOHNSON '33 CURATOR OF MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ART (OPEN RANK)

The Allen Memorial Art Museum (AMAM) at Oberlin College is seeking applicants for a curatorial position in modern and contemporary art at the assistant, associate, or full curatorial level. The curator will oversee all aspects of the museum's research, interpretation, and presentation of its important post-1900 art collections and will collaborate with the curator of academic programs, curator of education, and other staff to engage students in curatorial and research projects and plan a broad range of public programs. The curatorship is a continuing 12-month Administrative and Professional Staff position at the Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, reporting to the director of the museum.

Responsibilities: The curator will oversee an outstanding permanent collection of approximately 5,500 American, European, and global works from 1900 to the present representing all media; approximately 1,200 works in the Eva Hesse Archive; and circa 120 African works, most dating to after 1900. The curator will liaise with the curator of Asian art on oversight of post-1900 Asian works. Specific responsibilities include:

- developing in-house and traveling exhibitions and collection installations;
- monitoring and making recommendations for care of the collection;
- teaching with the collection for Oberlin College classes and for other groups;
- participating in collection- and exhibition-related programming for campus and public audiences;
- working with curatorial colleagues and Oberlin College faculty to conceptualize and initiate teaching exhibitions;
- identifying acquisitions through purchase and gift;
- carrying out original research and publishing on the collection;
- expanding physical and digital access to collections;
- working closely with the director and Oberlin College staff to cultivate a broad donor base and to identify, apply for, and report on grant-funded activities;
- contributing to the development of the museum's strategic planning initiatives;
- preparing a long-range plan for post-1900 holdings;
- mentoring and supervising student assistants;
- and other duties as assigned.

Requirements: An M.A. in art history or a closely-related field is required, a Ph.D. in art history is preferred. All applicants should have at least 3 years of full-time curatorial experience caring for an art collection and experience working on exhibitions; consideration for associate or full curator rank will be commensurate with experience. Other requirements include:

- broad knowledge of art history, particularly from 1900 forward, and a deep commitment to a contextual, cross-disciplinary approach to original works of art;
- demonstrated knowledge of, and experience with, the exhibition process;
- a record of publication and public speaking;
- object-based teaching experience;
- some experience relating to the conservation of works of art and to provenance research;
- a commitment to expanding access to the collection for diverse audiences and to fostering inclusion through museum curatorial practice;
- excellent communication skills, as a substantial amount of time will be spent with others on the phone, through email, and in video meetings and in person, and effective leadership and interpersonal skills;
- outstanding collaborative abilities, as the curator will be an important liaison between the museum and faculty, students, supporters, visitors, community partners, and artists;
- highly-developed administrative and organizational capabilities;
- a high degree of professionalism, close attention to detail, collegiality, and ability to meet deadlines;
- the ability to work occasional evening and weekend hours, with some travel required, and to lift and carry objects weighing up to 25 pounds;
- foreign language skills commensurate with one's field.

Quick Link for Posting: <http://jobs.oberlin.edu/postings/10824>

Compensation: Salary will be commensurate with qualifications and experience; the position includes an excellent benefits package and the opportunity to apply for travel grants and research leaves.

To Apply: Candidates should submit a letter of application; curriculum vitae; statement regarding how the candidate addresses diversity, equity, and inclusion through curatorial work; and names, addresses and phone numbers of three references by November 15, 2021 via Oberlin College's PeopleAdmin portal at <https://jobs.oberlin.edu/postings/10824>. All applications must be received via the PeopleAdmin portal. Applications received after the deadline may be considered.

About the Allen Memorial Art Museum (AMAM) and Oberlin College: For more than a century, Oberlin College has been committed to promoting direct study of original works of art to foster visual literacy and a deeper understanding of the diversity of the world's cultures. Today the AMAM houses an encyclopedic collection of more than 15,000 works selected to provide a comprehensive overview of the history of art and is recognized as one of the best academic museums in the country. The AMAM serves a broad regional audience and operates on the premise that learning about art is important for everyone, a principle demonstrated by free public admission, offered since its founding in 1917.

In the field of modern and contemporary art, the AMAM's post-1900 holdings include outstanding examples of Expressionist, Cubist, and Surrealist paintings, sculpture, and works on paper, with American post-1945 holdings being especially impressive and deep, including superb examples from all the major movements, including Abstract Expressionism, Pop Art, Minimalism, Conceptual Art, New Realism, and Photo-Realism, as well as work in new media. The collection includes significant African-American and Latin American works, as well as works by women artists, acquisi-

tion of which has been a priority in recent years. Artists represented include Derrick Adams, El Anatsui, Belkis Ayón, José Bedia, Dawoud Bey, McArthur Binion, Georges Braque, Margaret Burroughs, Elizabeth Catlett, Enrique Chagoya, Willem De Kooning, Dorothy Dehner, Jim Dine, Edouard Duval-Carrié, Zeng Fanzhi, Audrey Flack, LaToya Ruby Frazier, Genevieve Gaignard, Nefer-titi Goodman, Arshile Gorky, Milt Hinton, Graciela Iturbide, Jasper Johns, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Yayoi Kusama, Wifredo Lam, Louise Lawler, Jacob Lawrence, Hung Liu, Michelangelo Lovelace, Joan Miró, Amedeo Modigliani, Vik Muniz, Elizabeth Murray, Shirin Neshat, Malangatana Ngwenya, Oscar Niemeyer, Isamu Noguchi, Catherine Opie, Gabriel Orozco, Pablo Picasso, Jackson Pollock, Liliana Porter, Robert Rauschenberg, Judit Reigl, Betye Saar, Fanny Sanín, Arlene Shechet, Roger Shimomura, Malick Sidibé, Jaune Quick-To-See Smith, Pat Steir, Frank Stella, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Henry Ossawa Tanner, Dorothea Tanning, Masami Teraoka, Mickalene Thomas, Francisco Toledo, Adolfo Patiño Torres, Anna von Mertens, Andy Warhol, Carrie Mae Weems, Fred Wilson, and Zao Wou-Ki among others.

The AMAM commissioned Claes Oldenburg's first permanent outdoor sculpture, Giant Three-Way Plug, installed in 1970, and the museum has other important early outdoor sculptures by Mary Miss and Robert Morris. The AMAM purchased Eva Hesse's seminal sculpture *Laocoön* in 1970 and houses the Eva Hesse Archive, the largest collection of material about and created by Hesse in any public institution, including working drawings, collages, photographs, diaries, datebooks, and letters. The collection of African art, much of which dates to after 1900, includes textiles, sculpture, masks, and other ceremonial objects from West, East, and South Africa.

In addition to serving a broad public, the AMAM's collection of post-1900 art is used in teaching in nearly all Oberlin College departments in the Arts and Sciences and the Conservatory of Music, including Africana studies, anthropology, art, biology, chemistry, cinema studies, comparative American studies, creative writing, environmental studies, foreign languages and literatures, history, Latin American studies, mathematics, music and historical performance, politics, and religion, among others.

The museum complex includes a 1917 building designed by Cass Gilbert. In the 1970s, Robert Venturi designed a gallery dedicated to the presentation of modern and contemporary art, the architect's first museum commission. The AMAM also shares responsibility with Oberlin College for a Frank Lloyd Wright-designed house, the first Usonian house in Ohio, located in Oberlin.

Founded in 1833, Oberlin College is a private, four-year, highly selective national liberal arts college near Cleveland, Ohio, and is also home to an outstanding Conservatory of Music. Together, the two divisions enroll approximately 2,900 students. Oberlin College was the first college in the U.S. to make interracial education and co-education central to its mission. The College continues to view a diverse, equitable, and inclusive educational environment as essential to the excellence of its academic program. Among liberal arts colleges, Oberlin is a national leader in successfully placing graduates into Ph.D. programs.

Oberlin College is committed to professional staff, faculty, and student diversity, equity, and inclusion. The incumbent will bring understanding of or experience working with underrepresented and diverse academic populations. Oberlin is especially interested in candidates who can contribute to the excellence and diversity of the academic community. Oberlin recruits, employs, trains, compensates, and promotes regardless of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, gender identity,

sexual orientation, disability, age, veteran's status, and/or other protected status as required by applicable law.

Reference:

JOB: Curator, Allen Memorial Art Museum. In: Arthist.net, Sep 14, 2021 (accessed Sep 17, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/34766>>.