

## ART MUSEUM TECHNICIAN

Work in this class involves the performance of a variety of technical assignments in support of curatorial staff at The Ackland Art Museum, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Under general instructions from the museum director, the employee in this class is responsible for checking, packing and unpacking, handling, and installing valuable and irreplaceable works of art; designing and constructing temporary walls, bases, stands and containers; planning and installing exhibitions and exhibit lighting systems; constructing and maintaining secure storage areas for works of art not on display; and maintaining a workshop capable of supporting the above functions. Work includes the training and supervision of part-time workers.

### I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK

Complexity of Work: Employee must be knowledgeable of professional standards for handling and displaying works of art; techniques of lighting, hanging, and displaying; effects of light, humidity and temperature on works of art; special packaging techniques for shipping and storing works of art of various kinds such as sculpture, painting, objects, and work of art on paper. Employee must be knowledgeable of matting, hinging and framing works of art on paper, and securing framing of paintings. Employee performs tasks representative of the cabinet and carpentry trades in the construction of walls, bases, containers, bins, carts, etc. Some electrical knowledge is required in installing lighting systems.

Intricacy of Work: The packaging of art works for shipment requires the fabrication of braces and stands in the crates which hold the contents immobile and protect their surfaces. Matting, hinging, and framing require close measurement and use of proper materials as well as protection of works during matting and framing.

Controls Over Work: As employee manages a specialized support function, technical guidance on work, techniques and materials, etc., are specified by curatorial staff at the beginning of a particular task. In setting up exhibits, instructions usually indicate only what the desired result should be. The employee is responsible for planning and implementing work steps to meet desired results.

Judgmental Demands: Employee must have the ability to recognize potential damage to the work of art before it occurs. In cases where exhibits do not contain packaging and hanging specifications, the employee in consultation with the curatorial staff examines the work of art and determines the safest way to package or display it. In lighting exhibits, the employee must measure the intensity of lighting in order to effectively light them while maintaining specified levels not damaging to the works of art.

### II. RESPONSIBILITY

Potential: Significant damage to valuable and irreplaceable works of art could occur due to improperly handling, hinging, packaging, storage or display. Mishandling can have an impact upon the levels of insurance fees paid by the University for the Art Collection.

Care and Attention: The employee must determine and specify hanging or supporting hardware which will securely support the work of art. Consideration must be given to the weight, condition, surface, and support of the work of art, the type of wall, and the strength of connections. In packaging art works for shipment, supports, braces and packing materials must be sufficient to protect the work of art during movement. While handling works of art, employee must impress upon temporary workers the value, fragility, and importance of handling delicate objects lightly, as well as the irreplaceability of the works and potential damage if they are accidentally dropped, improperly handled or installed. All work must be closely inspected to assure that standards are met in order to maintain accreditation with the American Association of Museums.

### III. PHYSICAL EFFORT

Intensity of Effort: The construction of bases, stands, walls, bins, etc. requires heavy hand/arm work. Some works of art, sculptures in particular, are cumbersome and heavy.

Frequency and Duration of Effort: Tasks involving the handling of works of art and construction of items occur regularly throughout the workday.

### IV. WORK SURROUNDINGS AND HAZARDS

Worker Surroundings: Employee works in an environmentally controlled shop or in galleries.

Hazardous Conditions: While handling heavy works of art and determining heights for hanging, the employee is subject to back strain or injuries to extremities if heavy items are dropped or tools improperly handled.

### V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS

Knowledges, Skills and Abilities: Working knowledge of the materials of works of art in order to recognize problems as they may occur and to assess potential problems in advance. Working knowledge of the proper handling of works of art, including: techniques and materials involved in matting and framing paintings and works of art on paper; techniques and hardware involved in displaying works of art; techniques involved in checking and packing works of art for shipment; knowledge of the effects of light, temperature and humidity on works of art. Working knowledge of the tools and work techniques of the cabinetmaking and carpentry trades sufficient to construct walls, containers, stands, bases, bins, etc. Ability to plan work operations. Ability to train and supervise other workers.

Minimum Education and Experience: Graduation from high school and two years of experience in performing a variety of curatorial support tasks in an art museum; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.