

# ByalaSearch LLC

## CURATOR OF VISUAL ARTS

**ByalaSearch LLC** is pleased to announce that our firm has been retained by Philadelphia Contemporary to identify candidates for the position of Curator of Visual Arts.

## ABOUT PHILADELPHIA CONTEMPORARY

Philadelphia Contemporary presents cross-disciplinary art that reflects the diversity and vitality of Philadelphia. The organization thrives through a dynamic and sustainable model of collaboration and partnership. Philadelphia Contemporary is developing a substantial new building as a permanent home: it will be accessible, welcoming and surprising.

The mission of Philadelphia Contemporary is to create a globally oriented hub for contemporary art that is deeply rooted in the diverse communities of Philadelphia; to create a building that serves and delights artists and visitors and enhances Philadelphia's cultural ecosystem; to champion a vibrant and sustainable business model based on partnerships and collaborations; to educate and empower youth through art.

## PRIMARY FUNCTION

Philadelphia Contemporary seeks an experienced Curator of Visual Arts with a track record of programming exhibitions in a variety of media and contexts. Reporting to the Senior Curator (Curator of Spoken Word), the new Curator of Visual Arts will play a key role in expanding the reach and impact of Philadelphia Contemporary across the region. The Curator's vision will also contribute to the building of the new permanent home for Philadelphia Contemporary. A key aspect of this role is building artistic partnerships, locally, nationally and globally; building partnerships with those in the community; and creating a sense of collaboration in the growth and access to art throughout Philadelphia.

## POSITION DESCRIPTION

### Specific Responsibilities of the Curator of Visual Arts:

- Conceive, plan and carry out the curation of exhibitions in the context of a program embracing visual arts, performance, written and spoken word and other media;
- Manage exhibitions and performances across a variety of settings from small gallery exhibitions to wide-ranging outdoor festivals throughout Philadelphia;

- Develop effective relationships with the team and provide creative leadership; be a communicative, honest and open partner;
- Liaise locally, nationally and internationally with a diverse group of artists and build relationships with site partners and community leaders; develop relationships and build trust with partners that are hosting shows;
- Envision and execute complex multi-site events;
- Provide external communications (speaking, writing and convening) for the institution;
- Initiate and maintain strong relationships with relevant art institutions, museums, galleries, cultural organizations, community groups, universities and others to build equity and accessibility in and to the arts for all groups;
- Enhance Philadelphia Contemporary's profile locally and nationally and support the success of artists' projects;
- In collaboration with the PC team and Development Manager, cultivate and steward relationships with donors, funders, and government agencies; provide assistance in order to obtain necessary grants;
- Form strong relationships with Philadelphia Contemporary's audiences and conduct outreach to receive feedback from constituents to evaluate the success of exhibitions and adherence to the mission.

### **Ideal Skills and Experience:**

- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree in art history, museum, cultural studies or related area preferred;
- Five years or equivalent experience in a curatorial capacity working in the visual arts with demonstrable evidence of curatorial abilities as well as administrative and managerial skills;
- Contribute to a collegial working environment; able to conceive and execute ideas with others; track record of collaboration with people and organizations across diverse scale, backgrounds, cultures and temperaments;
- Experience working with a diverse range of artists and artworks as well as an interdisciplinary approach to content and art; genuine passion and enthusiasm for creating affecting and inclusive encounters with art, and a track record of curating compelling exhibitions;
- Open-minded approach to the presentation of art, including experimentation; able to juxtapose ideas and concepts in new and unexpected ways, especially across disciplines;
- Experience working with artists, critics, educators, scholars and curators of color, in a capacity that produces valued collaborators;
- While valuing and considering the input of program/curatorial team, able to set boundaries and be decisive;
- Understand the balancing of priorities in creating collaborative projects while

maintaining the priorities of Philadelphia Contemporary;

- Excellent written and oral communication skills and the ability to connect with the PC team, public, press, partners and donors in clear language;
- Be able to passionately explain the creative and environmental legacy and landscape of Philadelphia and instill that in outside partners;
- Demonstrated ability to create mutually respectful relationships with diverse groups;
- Technically nimble and comfortable with a variety of art media, including those that utilize a considerable amount of technology;
- Ability to analyze and synthesize information into sound, well-organized goals, strategies and actions.

### **Critical Competencies for Success**

- Create innovative and inclusive public art exhibitions, demonstrating sensitivity to public and private art, their issues and discourse.
- Ability to position an organization as an original and vital artistic institution, with strong critical and community response; provide a well-respected public face for an institution.
- Experience in facilitating collaborative arts partnerships; track record of being an inclusive and effective collaborator, especially on socially-engaged projects.
- Ability and history of fostering a respectful work environment, where all voices are heard.

### **Other Characteristics**

The successful candidate will be passionate about the mission of Philadelphia Contemporary and value how their curation will impact that mission. The placement will be a skilled planner, able to prioritize, organize and complete projects as well as a hard worker with high energy. They will be a seasoned professional capable of proactively working in a start-up environment, balancing flexibility and urgency. The ideal candidate will possess a high level of integrity and the leadership skills to build trust, both internally and externally and will be comfortable working collaboratively, both remotely and in person. The candidate must possess the maturity, poise, and sophistication to represent Philadelphia Contemporary with passion, intelligence and subtlety, communicating the organization's mission and activities, while building complex relationships with a broad pool of constituents, including artists, donors and collaborating institutions. The ideal candidate will be open to creative risks and be able to persuasively explain the benefits of bold vision within the organization and to external partners. Dedication to the organization's mission of accessibility in the arts is key to success as the Curator of Visual Arts at Philadelphia Contemporary.

Kindly send nominations or expressions of interest to:

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