PARRISH ART MUSEUM

128 Years of Engagement, Vision, and Excellence

Job Title: Lead Preparator
Department: Curatorial
Date: September 23, 2026
Start Date: October 1, 2026, or upon mutual agreement
Reports to: Curatorial Affairs Manager
Works in Coordination With: Curators, Registrar, Art Handlers, Director of Security and Facilities
Supervises: Part-Time Preparators. Directs the on-site work of contract art installers, art handlers, vendors, and contractors.
Status: Full-time; Non-Exempt

PURPOSE AND SCOPE:
Under the general supervision of the Curatorial Affairs Manager and in coordination with the Registrar, the Lead Preparator provides and plans for a full range of museum-standard art handling and preparation services for collection artworks, loaned artworks, and exhibitions. Working with the curatorial team, part-time preparators, and vendors and contractors, the Lead Preparator coordinates and executes the installation of Museum exhibitions.
The Lead Preparator also provides regular and ongoing maintenance of collection and loan objects on view and in storage and assists the Registrar in condition reporting. The role encompasses daily maintenance of artwork and gallery signage, weekly maintenance of Museum exhibition spaces, and preparation and framing of works on paper and paintings.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:
The duties set out below are the essential functions of this position.

Art Handling, Preparation, and Collection Care

- Under supervision of the Curatorial Affairs Manager and in coordination with the Registrar, monitors on a daily basis and maintains works of art, both in storage and on exhibit, to ensure object safety and aesthetic presentation.
- Prepares artworks according to established museum best practices to ensure object safety and aesthetic presentation, including hinging, archival matting, framing, frame fabrication, and mount-making for exhibitions and long-term storage, including planning for archival packing.
- Installs all exhibition signage, including object labels, wall texts, and vinyl lettering.
- Maintains galleries for hands-on and participatory engagement activities for the public.
- In collaboration with the Director of Security and Facilities and building staff, maintains clean and well-organized art storage spaces, shipping and receiving areas, and preparation rooms.
- Ensures proper packing, storage, and exhibition preparation supplies are maintained at all times.
- Performs special projects and other related duties as required, directed, or as the situation dictates.

Exhibition Installation and Logistics

- Serves as an essential team member in the logistical planning around exhibitions across the Museum's indoor and outdoor spaces.
- In coordination with the curatorial team, organizes and executes installation of special exhibitions and permanent collection presentations.
- In collaboration with the exhibition curator and the Director of Security and Facilities, evaluates exhibition objects and gallery space requirements and proposes solutions for artwork installation, including any necessary construction, pedestal fabrication, and sourcing of media equipment. Liaises with vendors and contractors with keen awareness of budget and deadlines.
- Coordinates outdoor installation logistics with the exhibition curator, the Director of Security and Facilities, and contracted vendors. Site work such as concrete pouring and structural installation is performed by third-party contractors; this position coordinates scheduling and site access, is present on site during that work as required, and is responsible for ongoing artwork maintenance once the work is installed.
- Maintains current training and certification on installation equipment, including scissor lifts, provided by the Museum.

Crew Supervision and Vendor Coordination

- Plans and budgets for an adequate level of preparator assistance on a project basis and supervises the team to meet the department's goals and timelines.
- Organizes and supervises part-time preparators, and directs the work of art handlers, photographers, and contracted crews during installation and deinstallation, including projects requiring special installation, design, or rigging.
- Serves as the primary day-to-day contact for all exhibition-related vendors, art handlers, and contracted preparators.
- Schedules and directs the work of outside contractors, in coordination with the exhibition curator, the Curatorial Affairs Manager, and the Director of Security and Facilities.
- Solicits and reviews vendor estimates; provides cost information to the exhibition curator and Curatorial Affairs Manager for budget tracking and expense approval.
- Collects vendor and contractor documentation, including permits and proof of insurance, and provides it to the staff responsible for contract approval and labor compliance. Confirms that required documentation has been received before work begins on site.
- Ensures all work meets Museum standards for object safety and installation quality.

Loans and Collection Documentation

- Oversees and prepares incoming and outgoing loans and acquisitions, managing loan documentation, condition reports, and object location records in coordination with the Registrar and Curatorial Affairs Manager.
- Assists the Registrar with the inventory of the collection and updating of location records to ensure accurate documentation.
- Provides assistance to art couriers as required by the Registrar.

EDUCATION, EXPERIENCE, AND SKILLS:
Minimum five years of demonstrated experience in museum art handling and exhibition installation, with progressively increasing responsibility and an ability to troubleshoot complex installation logistics. Familiarity with installing a broad range of mediums, including painting, sculpture, works on paper, moving image, and sound. Demonstrated experience in overseeing the installation of outdoor sculpture. Experience in archival best practices and methods related to matting, framing, and hinging, with an emphasis on preparation of works on paper. Experience supervising preparator staff, art handlers, or contracted crews. Strong organizational skills and the ability to manage multiple concurrent installation timelines. Experience with The Museum System (TMS) or other collection databases.

ADDITIONAL ABILITIES:
- Strong organizational, interpersonal, and communication skills, with the ability to work well as part of a team.
- Able to work both independently and with a variety of staff, vendors, and the general public.
- Committed to confidentiality, integrity, and high ethical standards.
- Professionalism, curiosity, and a deep respect for the care and stewardship of cultural objects.
- Aligned with the Museum's mission as a dynamic cultural resource for the East End community and beyond, contributing to a collaborative and mission-driven organizational culture.

WORKING CONDITIONS:
The majority of work is performed in the Museum's art storage spaces, galleries, and loading dock. Some work is performed in a normal office environment, operating computers and other office equipment. The typical work week is 35 hours, Monday through Friday; extra or weekend hours may be required.
The physical demands and work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of the job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable qualified individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions of this position. This position:
- Operates various tools and machinery, including scissor lift, dock lift, table saw, drill press, miter saw, frame chop, heavy material lift, routers, and small hand tools.
- Frequently stands, walks, bends, crouches, and works on ladders and lifts for extended periods of time.
- Lifts heavy objects weighing up to 50 pounds.
- Works in and around active installation, loading dock, and shipping and receiving areas.

Scope of Authority: Reports to and works under the direction of the Curatorial Affairs Manager, who holds senior responsibility for curatorial operations and exhibition planning. Works in close coordination with the Chief Curator and the Registrar. Supervises part-time preparators and directs the on-site work of art handlers and contracted crews for assigned installations. Solicits and reviews vendor estimates and provides cost information to the exhibition curator and Curatorial Affairs Manager; expense approval and contract approval rest with those positions rather than with this one.

COMPENSATION

Non-Exempt (Hourly)

The hourly rate of pay for this position ranges from $36.00 to $40.00 per hour, commensurate with experience and qualifications.
This position is classified as non-exempt and is eligible for overtime compensation at 1.5 times the regular rate for all hours worked over 40 in a workweek, in accordance with federal and New York State wage and hour laws. The standard schedule is 35 hours per week; hours worked between 35 and 40 are paid at the regular rate. Overtime above 40 hours in a workweek should be scheduled in advance with the supervising manager. All hours worked are recorded and paid in accordance with applicable law.

The Parrish Art Museum offers a competitive benefits package including medical, dental, and vision coverage, paid time off, and participation in the Museum's retirement plan, subject to eligibility based on employment classification.

ABOUT THE PARRISH ART MUSEUM:

The Parrish Art Museum is a place to discover and connect with art and artists with a focus on the rich creative legacy of Eastern Long Island and its global impact on the art world. The Museum regularly presents temporary exhibitions, including new installations drawn from our world-class collection of more than 3,000 works, as well as special exhibitions that reconsider the work of a single artist or group exhibitions that explore compelling themes. The Parrish produces hundreds of public programs and offers a year-round schedule of inspiring education initiatives.

Situated within one of the most concentrated creative communities in the United States, the Parrish Art Museum is a vital cultural presence on the East End of Long Island. Originally founded in 1898 by Samuel L. Parrish in the Village of Southampton as a showcase for his collection, the Museum relocated in 2012 to a spacious, light-filled, purpose-built facility in Water Mill, New York designed by Herzog & de Meuron. The new facility provides for expanded services in research, interpretation, collaboration, education, and interactive, multidisciplinary programming. The Museum's landscape and critically acclaimed building honor Eastern Long Island's built and natural environment, evoking the unique atmosphere of the region that inspires many artists and visitors.

The Parrish Art Museum is an equal-opportunity employer committed to building a diverse and inclusive workplace. The Museum is committed to a work environment that supports, inspires, and respects all individuals, and we do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sincerely held religious practice, marital status, age, national origin, ancestry, sex, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, physical or mental disability, medical condition, predisposing genetic characteristics, genetic information, height, weight, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, military or veteran status, status as a victim of domestic violence, arrest or conviction record consistent with applicable law, reproductive health decision making, or any other status protected under federal, state, or local law. Individuals of diverse backgrounds are strongly encouraged to apply.

DISCLAIMER:
This job description is not intended to be a complete list of all duties, responsibilities, or qualifications associated with the position.

HOW TO APPLY
To apply, please send a resume and cover letter to hr@parrishart.org. Position open until filled. Due to the high volume of interest, regrettably, we cannot respond to individual applicants. If you are selected as a potential candidate, the Parrish will contact you to schedule an interview. No phone calls, please.

The Parrish Art Museum is an Equal Opportunity Employer committed to building a diverse and inclusive workplace. Candidates of all backgrounds are encouraged to apply.