

Lead Preparator

National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum

The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum seeks an experienced Lead Preparator to oversee the installation and care of the museum's robust exhibition program. The Museum is America's premier institution of Western history, art and culture. Founded in 1955, the Museum, located in Oklahoma City, collects, preserves and exhibits an internationally renowned collection of Western art and artifacts while sponsoring dynamic educational programs to stimulate interest in the enduring legacy of the American West.

More than 10 million visitors from around the world have sought out this unique museum to gain better understanding of the West: a region and a history that permeates our national culture. The Museum features a superb collection of classic and contemporary Western art, including works by Frederic Remington and Charles M. Russell, as well as sculptor James Earle Fraser's magnificent work, *The End of the Trail*. The exhibition wing houses a turn-of-the-century town and interactive galleries that focus on the American cowboy, rodeos, Native American culture, Victorian firearms, frontier military and Western performers.

The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum's mission is to preserve and interpret the evolving history and cultures of the American West. We are committed to diversity in our collections, exhibitions and programming, and to supporting our diverse community both in Oklahoma City and worldwide.

We support a community where all stories are collected, preserved and told, and we are working to amplify the voices of marginalized communities and cultures.

Supervisor: Chief Curatorial Officer

Summary: Lead Preparator is responsible for many aspects of the planning, preparation, installation, and maintenance of the Museum's exhibitions and related production areas. As a member of the Curatorial Department, the Preparator also serves as a lead Installation Crew member during periods of exhibition rotation.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Works and coordinates with curatorial department staff (curators, carpenters, painters, etc.) in both short and long term planning for exhibitions needs
- Responsible for project management for planned exhibits, including but not limited to, wall painting, wall preparation, construction, framing, scheduling and overseeing meetings with exhibit team members and developing timelines to complete exhibits and sketches for fabrication of special items
- Collaborates with curatorial staff to determine exhibit layout including floor plan and traffic flow
- Creates and manages short and long term budgets associated with preparation department needs
- Manages and mentors Assistant Preparator to cultivate and utilizes his/her talents to accomplish overall responsibilities of the department
- Manages and coordinates the work of the Design & Construction Carpenter and the Painter.
- Installs and de-installs permanent and temporary exhibitions, and any associated components

- Lights and maintains lighting for both permanent and temporary exhibits.
- Designs and fabricates custom mounts and exhibition furniture.
- Prepares and installs labels and didactic materials.
- Installs and maintains a variety of audio-visual equipment and related electronics.
- Assists with receiving exhibition shipments and with the unpacking and repacking of same
- Packs and transports art objects to and from lenders and donors
- Mats and frames works of art
- Performs preventive maintenance, cleaning and repair of all permanent exhibits.
- Performs storage and maintenance of all exhibit furniture
- Assists in special projects (museum wide) and performs other related duties, as assigned. May be required to work some weekend hours, and special events.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Required:

Demonstrated experience in handling, installing and mounting a variety of 2D and 3D objects in a wide range of media. Knowledge of professional practices and ethics for object care, display, and movement. Demonstrated knowledge of safe and archival materials and techniques for loaned and museum collection objects.

Demonstrated proficiency of practices and methods in mount making and demonstrated ability to apply this knowledge with initiative and judgment, concern for detail, accuracy and execution of work.

Demonstrated skills and knowledge of shop equipment and ability to effectively perform various skilled and semi-skilled tasks, including woodworking, brazing, use of adhesives and fasteners, construction methods, and use of stationary and portable power tools.

Experience with gallery lighting and ability to determine light exposure settings specific to the needs of an exhibition or to a given object.

Extensive experience with the set-up installation and maintenance of AV and a variety of digital media equipment.

Ability to move 50 lbs. objects and ability to operate lifts, pallet jacks, etc.

Ability to work cooperatively with supervisor, museum staff, interns and volunteers.

Must possess strong organization skills, leadership and interpersonal skills as well as a proven ability to manage multiple timelines and solve problems.

Ability to stand/work for prolonged periods of time

Education and Experience Qualifications:

B.A. degree with a focus on Art, Art History or History preferred and five years professional experience in a museum setting with a permanent collection.

Additional preference given to candidates with experience in working with both history and art collections; experience with coordination of large, complex exhibitions and gallery installations; exhibit design

Salary range: \$55,000 - based on experience and qualifications

To Apply: Send Cover Letter and Resume to hr@nationalcowboymuseum.org. Please put **Lead Preparator** in the subject line