



Preparator

Job Summary

The Preparator plays a vital role in supporting exhibitions, loans, and the ongoing care of the museum's permanent collection. This position is responsible for the safe handling, installation, deinstallation, and transportation of artworks, as well as fabrication, packing, coordinating logistics, and supporting preventive conservation.

The Preparator collaborates closely with the Collections and Exhibitions team, including contracted preparators, to ensure that projects are executed smoothly and in accordance with museum's best practices.

The ideal candidate will have hands-on experience with art handling, packing and transportation, matting and framing, gallery lighting, construction, painting, and woodshop safety. Success in this role requires excellent communication skills (both written and verbal), critical thinking, technical proficiency, and the ability to manage multiple priorities in a fast-paced environment.

Education and Experience:

- Associate's degree required, Bachelor's degree preferred.
- 2–4 years of experience in museum, gallery, or exhibition preparation work.

Qualifications:

- Proficient in MS Office and Adobe Creative Suite; experience with SketchUp preferred. Strong computer skills are essential.
- Skilled in art handling, packing and crating, mount making, installation, and the safe use of various tools and equipment.
- Experienced in operating trucks, forklifts, lifts, and other material handling equipment safely.
- Competent in woodworking and intermediate carpentry, knowledgeable in selecting and applying paints, stains, finishes, and adhesives (including vinyl adhesives).
- Ability to collaborate effectively with registrars, conservators, curators, and external vendors.
- Knowledgeable about and committed to practicing safety procedures when using shop equipment.
- Experienced in maintaining a clean, organized, and safe workshop environment, including routine maintenance of machinery and tools.
- Familiar with museum-approved materials such as acid-free, non-off-gassing, and archival-quality supplies.
- Physically capable of standing or working on feet for extended periods and lifting or carrying objects up to 50lbs safely.
- Strong interpersonal skills with the ability to build and maintain effective working relationships.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Highly organized, with strong planning skills and the ability to meet strict deadlines.

Responsibilities:

Art Handling and Installation

- Handle, install, and deinstall artworks, including 2D and 3D objects, time-based media, and large-scale sculpture

- Collaborate with the Collections Manager/Registrar to receive and handle artwork in accordance with AAM standards and institutional protocols.
- Unpack and pack crates; prepare works for display, including archival matting, framing, mounting, and assisting Collections Manager/Registrar with condition reporting as needed
- Prepare and install a range of exhibition components such as mounts, vitrines, casework, interactive displays, video installations, projections, and exhibition graphics (e.g., vinyl, wall text)
- Implement and maintain gallery lighting systems, including adjustments during exhibition installation and maintenance periods.

Exhibition Fabrication and Gallery Preparation

- Fabricate custom exhibition furniture, mounts, and display supports using woodworking and general construction skills
- Oversee scheduling and execution of temporary gallery wall construction and painting of gallery walls, estimate time and materials, determine fabrication methods, and produce sketches as needed.
- Use SketchUp software to visualize exhibition layouts per the Chief Curator's direction (training will be provided if needed)
- Ensure compliance with ADA guidelines and that accessibility standards are followed during exhibition construction and layout planning

Preventive Conservation and Environmental Monitoring

- Assist the Conservator and Collections Manager/Registrar in preventive conservation efforts, ensuring proper object handling and care protocols.
- Assist in monitoring gallery and storage conditions, including temperature, humidity, light levels, and vibrations, and report any anomalies or concerns.
- Support Integrated Pest Management (IPM) by placing traps, monitoring activity, and reporting issues to Collections Manager/Registrar and Chief Curator
- Help maintain exhibition galleries and the sculpture park, especially in the absence of the Conservator, and promptly communicate concerns to the appropriate staff

Transportation and Logistics:

- Pack, unpack, and transport artworks, exhibition furniture, and supplies using museum or rental vehicles, including vans and box trucks.
- Safely operate material handling equipment such as forklifts, boom lifts, pallet jacks, and platform lift trucks.
- Coordinate with the Chief Curator and Registrar/Collections Manager on artwork movement schedules, loan installations, and shipping logistics.
- Transport tools, materials, and casework between museum workspaces, galleries, and off-site storage facilities as required.

Maintenance and Departmental Support

- Maintain an organized inventory of tools, hardware, lighting supplies, framing materials, and construction equipment.
- Research and order materials as needed for exhibition builds, storage solutions, and packing—ensuring timely procurement and cost-effective sourcing.
- Clean, organize, and maintain workspaces, including exhibition prep areas, workshop, and collections storage rooms.
- Provide ongoing maintenance and monitoring of exhibition galleries, reporting technical or environmental issues to the appropriate staff.
- Assist the team in consolidating Collections storage areas for more effective use of space

Administrative:

- Attend department and all-staff meetings; communicate updates and report on project progress
- Respond to emails in a timely and professional manner to ensure smooth coordination within the department
- Request quotes and source vendor estimates for fabrication, transport, and materials purchases.
- Participate in meetings related to the museum's building expansion project, reviewing architectural plans

Benefits:

- Vacation time
- Sick time
- Float Days
- Holiday Pay
- Free Museum Membership
- Medical
- Dental
- Vision
- Voluntary Life
- 403b with Match

Pay:

\$49,000 - \$55,000 per year

The Vero Beach Museum of Art is an Equal Opportunities Employer and seeks diversity in its workforce. The Museum is committed to attracting, retaining, developing and promoting the most qualified employees without regard to race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, physical or mental disability, or past, present, or future service in the uniformed services of the United States, or any other characteristic prohibited by federal, state, or local law.

If you or anyone you know is interested in this position, please send a cover letter and resume to Danielle Elliott at delliott@vbmuseum.org