

## **Executive Director and Chief Curator Syracuse University Art Museum**

### **Job Description**

Syracuse University seeks a dynamic and experienced arts administrator for the position of executive director and chief curator (EDCC) of the Syracuse University Art Museum (SU Art Museum). The EDCC will be a collaborative leader who articulates and advances the vision, mission and values of the SU Art Museum and its programs while supporting the shared strategic priorities of Syracuse University. The ideal candidate possesses excellent people skills, financial acumen and proven fundraising and strategic thinking abilities, and is invested in furthering the organization's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility.

### **Job Responsibilities**

The EDCC reports to the associate provost for strategic initiatives in the Office of Academic Affairs and will:

- Oversee all administrative and operational activities of the museum and provide strategic and collaborative leadership and vision.
- Provide guidance and mentorship to seven full-time staff members—associate director, curator, curator of education and academic outreach, registrar, assistant registrar and provenance researcher, preparator and administrative specialist—as well as graduate assistants, work-study students, fellows and interns.
- Lead the development and implementation of the museum's strategic plan, which supports the museum's mission and shared strategic priorities of Syracuse University.
- Lead the application process for American Alliance of Museums accreditation and uphold professional best practice standards to retain accreditation status.
- Plan, oversee and manage the departmental budget, which includes an operational budget provided by the University as well as several endowments and restricted and non-restricted funds. Approve expenditures and develop long-range budget planning. Prepare the museum's Annual Report, as well as year-end reports for grants and funders.
- Articulate a compelling vision for the museum and its role as a center for teaching and research at Syracuse University.
- Lead and oversee the thoughtful growth and care of the University art collection.
- Lead and oversee a program that generates exhibitions, publications and other types of audience engagement that advance scholarship, develop the museum field and introduce new audiences to the power of art and its ability to increase empathy for people and experiences different from their own.
- Provide critical review of research and scholarly texts created by all staff members.
- Provide oversight of the exhibition schedule for the SU Art Museum and Palitz Gallery at the Lubin House in New York City.
- Support the museum's mission to increase awareness and appreciation for the arts through expanding connections and collaborations with University and community stakeholders.

- Implement a collections care strategy that adheres to professional museum best standards and includes policies governing conservation, documentation, security, storage and physical and digital access of collections.
- Work with all appropriate departments at the University to maintain existing exhibition and storage facilities and develop new strategies for future growth.
- Serve as the lead fundraiser for the museum and responsibly manage financial resources and the museum's budget.
- Discover and engage Syracuse University alumni and donors for philanthropic gifts, including both gifts-in-kind and financial support.
- Serve as the board manager for the newly formed Advisory Board, including cultivating new board members.
- Work closely with the Advisory Board to raise the profile of the museum and Syracuse University.
- Research and write grants to support the museum's strategic initiatives and projects.

### **Job Qualifications**

- Demonstrated managerial and leadership experience.
- Highly developed creative problem solving, persuasion and negotiation skills. Excellent written and verbal communication skills. Ability to use these skills to develop existing and forge new relationships with faculty and local, regional, national and international communities to advance the aims of the Academic Strategic Plan at Syracuse University and increase public impact and collaboration among stakeholders at the University and in the local and regional communities.
- Proven curatorial experience, including designing and executing exhibitions, publications and programming. Experience overseeing collections, operations, fundraising efforts, public relations, marketing initiatives and budgets. Preference given to candidates who gained these experiences while working at a museum on an academic campus.
- Expertise or subject knowledge in at least one area of the museum's collection, with proven experience developing programming that takes a global approach and highlights the diversity of people, ideas and works of art.
- Demonstrated knowledge of current trends and conversations within the museum and curatorial fields, including equity-oriented practices that center community voices.
- Extensive knowledge of and experience with professional practices of collection care and management.
- Extensive knowledge of the American Alliance of Museums accreditation process. Preference given to candidates with experience successfully completing the accreditation process.
- Experience working successfully with boards, faculty councils and student groups.
- Significant record of successful fundraising through philanthropy and grants.
- Advanced degree in art history or related field (master's required, Ph.D. preferred) and at least seven years of experience in a senior-level administrative role in a museum or similar environment, or an equivalent combination of experience and education.

## About the Syracuse University Art Museum

The SU Art Museum is a point of pride for Syracuse University, featuring one of the ten largest academic museum collections in the United States and providing a rich academic resource for faculty, students and alumni. It serves the culturally vibrant communities of Syracuse and the Central New York region, as well as New York City through its exhibitions and programming at the Louise and Bernard Palitz Gallery at Lubin House.

The museum acquires and preserves works of art and uses its extensive collection of more than 45,000 objects to serve as a museum-laboratory for research, exploration and discussion and aims to foster diverse and inclusive perspectives by uniting students and the local and global communities. The museum welcomes all visitors to experience its exhibitions and public programs that promote original research, creative thinking and increased mindfulness.

The SU Art Museum plays an active educational role on campus. Its galleries and new study room function as learning sites and its expansive collection as a teaching and research tool that serves students and faculty from all schools and colleges on campus. The museum hosts approximately 250 class visits per year and works closely with faculty from a wide range of academic departments.

Museum staff also collaborate with faculty to curate curriculum-focused exhibitions, offering students the opportunity to learn about the work of the museum and to contribute their perspectives to the interpretation of the museum's collections. The museum also hosts a Faculty Fellows Program, a stipend-supported opportunity that guides faculty from diverse departments on how to incorporate object-based teaching and research into their existing course syllabi and provides ongoing curricular and instructional support.

The SU Art Museum is a member of the Coalition of Museum and Art Centers (CMAC), a vibrant consortium of visual art centers across campus (visit [cmac.syr.edu](http://cmac.syr.edu)). The SU Art Museum also offers several programs that engage with community partners and the University community, including the Photography and Literacy Project, which promotes critical thinking, self-expression, literacy and self-esteem for youth in the Syracuse City School District.

## Collection and Digital Access

The SU Art Museum serves as the steward of a collection of more than 45,000 objects that spans 5,500 years, is global in geographic scope (including Europe, the Americas, East Asia, South Asia and West Africa) and represents a diversity of media (including works on paper, paintings, sculpture, photography, ceramic, textiles and glassware). The collection also features gifts from artists, including content from studios and complete print catalogs. Related correspondence and business records for many of these artists are held at the Special Collections Research Center at Syracuse University Libraries.

Recent collecting efforts have focused on supporting the University's curriculum and introducing greater racial and gender diversity into the museum's holdings. Since 2019, purchases have prioritized contemporary artworks by Black and Indigenous artists.

Museum staff work closely with advisors throughout the University to optimize the physical space, including exhibition galleries and collections storage, and to improve physical and digital accessibility of the museum's collections. The museum recently adopted eMuseum from Gallery Systems as its digital platform, allowing online users to better search its holdings. About two-thirds of the museum's more than 45,000 objects have been digitized, and the museum continues to seek grant funding to digitize the remaining one-third.

## Exhibitions

The SU Art Museum presents annually eight to ten exhibitions in its galleries on the University's main campus and three to four exhibitions in the Palitz Gallery at the Lubin House in New York City. It also curates innovative virtual and traveling exhibitions. Recent exhibitions have highlighted artists who have been traditionally underrepresented in the canon and have explored themes such as migration, diaspora, innovation, the justice system in the United States and climate change.

For more information about the SU Art Museum's current and past exhibitions, visit [museum.syr.edu/exhibition](https://museum.syr.edu/exhibition).

For inquiries, please contact search committee chair Michael Speaks, dean of the School of Architecture, at [maspeaks@syr.edu](mailto:maspeaks@syr.edu).

To apply for this position, please visit [www.sujobopps.com/postings/97926](https://www.sujobopps.com/postings/97926).

