

2.8 CURATOR, CONTEMPORARY HISTORY AND TRENDS OMCA Lab



REPORTS TO: Senior Curator, History

SUPERVISES: None

STATUS: Full Time, Exempt

OMCA CORE COMMITMENT

All staff embrace and advance the OMCA mission, values, and vision, and uphold OMCA core principles in their work, public interactions, working relationships, and efforts on behalf of the Museum and the people OMCA serves. This shared commitment helps build a relevant and sustainable future for OMCA. The core principles are:

- **Open optimism**... communicating, learning, experimenting, and working in new ways while upholding mutual respect, trust, transparency, and quality in our work
- **Mission minded**... embracing collective leadership for institutional success in the visitor experience, public engagement, financial sustainability, and relevancy for the future
- **Courageous collaborations**...integrating multiple viewpoints and talents through cross-disciplinary, cross-functional, and cooperative processes within the Museum and with our public and communities
- **Adaptive accountability**...demonstrating capacity to fulfill expectations while remaining responsive to the issues of our community and the ever changing environment in which we work

ROLE OF THE OMCA LAB

The OMCA Lab provides expertise in California art, history, and natural sciences, and advocates for visitors. Its goal is the translation of that knowledge into dynamic visitor experiences, as part of the on-going creation of a 21st century museum in service to the public. Members of the Lab use historic and scholarly knowledge, create interdisciplinary connections, and interpret collections, to inform explorations of contemporary issues relevant to varied and broad audiences. They do so in a variety of formats, from exhibitions and publications to online activities and public programs.

SUMMARY OF POSITION DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Curator of Contemporary History and Trends directs and manages the acquisition, documentation, research, and development of OMCA history and contemporary collections and content across diverse delivery platforms, including multidisciplinary exhibitions, public programs, publications, and online activities. The Curator serves as facilitator in engaging multiple communities in dynamic conversations and explorations of content, and engages in the highest quality research on history and contemporary trends, reflecting the diversity and complexities of the California experience.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following reflects OMCA's definition of essential functions for this position, but does not restrict the tasks that may be assigned. OMCA may assign or reassign duties and responsibilities to this position at any time due to reasonable accommodation or other reasons.

Institutional Responsibilities

- Support the Museum's mission, values, vision, and core commitment to the visitor experience, community engagement, and institutional relevancy for the future;
- Contribute to and support the OMCA strategic plan, annual priorities, and institutional initiatives such as diversity advancement;
- Exercise leadership, the highest level of integrity, and professionalism in all aspects of work on behalf of OMCA and service to the public;
- Contribute creative ideas and propose solutions to support a proactive work environment;
- Contribute to a positive organizational culture based on mutual respect, a spirit of collegiality, cooperation, and openness to many perspectives;
- Work within guidelines for the prudent management of the OMCA annual budget and finances;
- Adhere to personnel policies and practices;
- Participate in a culture of ongoing learning, collaboration, innovation, creativity, and community engagement;
- Participate on and/or lead project teams and interdepartmental committees as assigned; and,

- Participate in conversations and education with colleagues and peers about museum practices, standards, and trends.

Collections, Exhibition, and Program Development

- Research, document, and develop collections related to contemporary history and trends that reflect California's diversity and complexities;
- Develop creative approaches to using collections to support diverse types of visitor experiences, delivery platforms, interdisciplinary strategies, and topics representative of multiple viewpoints and perspectives;
- Identify and secure touring exhibitions that meet OMCA's mission and, when feasible, create additional exhibition elements to deepen the California experience for visitors;
- Collaborate in the development and implementation of collections management systems, procedures, and conservation activities; and
- Attend to the Museum's policies, procedures, and professional standards regarding the acquisition, documentation, care, and presentation of collections.

Research and Facilitation of Content

- Develop high quality scholarship and content that is timely, interdisciplinary, and most representative of issues and trends in California and its relationship with the rest of the world past, present and future;
- Develop and conduct activities for engaging the public in dynamic conversations and explorations of content relevant to the California experience, both historical and contemporary, through such formats as OMCA advisory councils, community organizations, thought leaders and peers; and
- Collaborate with staff in developing strategies for, and producing, a seamless integration of scholarship with interpretation across diverse platforms such as exhibition text, web content, articles, public presentations, training sessions, and programs.

Project Management and Administration;

- Assist in or conduct project management for exhibitions and other activities;
- Direct projects and initiatives including the research, preparation, and administration of related budgets, timelines, reports, and funding proposals and applications;
- Develop, negotiate, and monitor professional services contracts;
- Supervise and train volunteers, interns, and temporary staff.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Contemporary history and trends or a closely related field supported by principles and practices of scholarship research. The search committee will consider candidates specializing in any aspects of California history, but will be especially interested in candidates who specialize in 20th / 21st century history, with sub-specialization in race, ethnicity, labor, gender and/or environmental history;
- Contemporary history and trends collection development and management, including methods of selection, documentation, evaluation, preservation, exhibition, handling, and interpretation;
- Fundraising techniques, grant application procedures, and funding sources;
- Computer systems and applications;
- Museum ethics and standards for collections management and conservation;
- English, fluent in both spoken and written form; and,
- A secondary language, such as Spanish or Chinese, is desired.

Ability to:

- Analyze, synthesize, and interpret complex ideas for multiple platforms serving diverse audiences and museum visitors;
- Communicate effectively orally and in writing; and
- Operate a motor vehicle in the performance of assigned duties.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

A combination of experience and education that demonstrates possession of the necessary knowledge and abilities for this position is required as noted:

- Six years of responsible professional work experience in a museum or related institution working with contemporary history and trends materials including developing collections, exhibitions, publications, programs, and other content platforms supported by research and collections; and,
- Master's degree or higher from an accredited college or university in the field of history, American studies, anthropology, or a related field.

PHYSICAL & MENTAL REQUIREMENTS

While performing the duties of this position, the employee is frequently required to do the following:

- Coordinate multiple tasks simultaneously;
- Collect, interpret, and/or analyze complex data and information; and,
- Utilize visual acuity to read technical information, analyze objects, and/or use a keyboard.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

While performing the duties of this position, the employee is frequently exposed to the following:

- Noise, such as groups of people working in enclosed areas;
- Typical office environment; and,
- Operate a motor vehicle in the performance of assigned duties.

LICENSE OR CERTIFICATE

To perform the duties of this position, the employee is required to possess the following:

- Valid California driver's license.