

Philadelphia Museum of Art

Search for the Lisa Roberts and David Seltzer Curator of Modern and Contemporary Design
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

TITLE:	Lisa Roberts and David Seltzer Curator of Modern and Contemporary Design
DEPARTMENT:	Modern and Contemporary Art
REPORTS TO:	The Keith L and Katherine Sachs Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art and Head of Department
SUPERVISES:	Assistant Curator of Modern and Contemporary Decorative Arts
CLASSIFICATION:	Full-time, Exempt

Job Description:

Reporting to The Keith L. and Katherine Sachs Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, this role will lead the conceptualizing and organizing of exhibitions and installations, conduct and present research, connect with designers, makers, artists, and architects across the field and collaborate across departments to develop programming and scholarly and educational materials. In partnership with the Sachs Curator and Museum leadership, the Curator of Design focuses on these key areas:

Strategic Planning: The Curator of Design will define the strategic direction of the Museum's design and decorative arts collections, ensuring alignment with the institution's strategic plan.

Collaboration & Cultivation: The Curator of Design will be proactive in collaborating and engaging with departments across the museum to contextualize works of modern and contemporary design and decorative arts.

Exhibitions & Programming: The Curator of Design will be responsible for organizing all exhibitions and installations in the Modern and Contemporary Design gallery and elsewhere across the building. In collaboration with department colleagues across the institution, they will develop dynamic exhibitions that engage the collection in innovative and expansive ways while supporting a strong program deeply engaged with a diversity of artists, locally and internationally.

Community Engagement: The Curator of Design will continue to support and expand Collab, a group of design professionals and enthusiasts who actively support modern and contemporary design at the museum. In partnership with Collab, the Curator of Design will develop exhibition previews, day trips, talks, special access events, and other opportunities for members to connect with other design curators

and visionaries. In addition, the Curator of Design will participate in Collab's annual student award competition and the selection of the Annual Design Excellence Award issued by Collab and organize the exhibition of work by the recipient(s).

Essential Functions:

Collections

- The Curator works closely with the museum's conservation, collections management, information and interpretive technology, and design and installation staff to ensure that the works of modern and contemporary design and decorative arts in the department's care are properly documented.
- The Curator will ensure works are conserved when treatment is needed, stored in a safe and accessible manner, published and interpreted online, and effectively displayed in the museum's galleries.
- The Curator will work with relevant members of the department's curatorial staff to review and provide recommendations on loan requests received by the Museum.
- In consultation with the department's curators, the Curator will develop plans and direct research on the collection or related topics.

Exhibitions and Programming

- With the department curators, the Curator will work collaboratively with the Education division on the development and production of interpretive materials related to the collection, such as object labels, introductory text panels, gallery and audio guides—and on the content and presentation strategies developed for public programs and distance learning programs.
- They will also organize and supervise the planning and presentation of gallery installations and special exhibitions of design, either individually or in collaboration with colleagues from the PMA or peer institutions. This work should be understood as encompassing every aspect of the development and implementation of special exhibitions, from initial project planning and research to participation in budgeting and resource development, the production of the catalog, the creation of the installation design, and a marketing plan to promote the exhibition, and the development and presentation of interpretive programs that will accompany it.

Cultivation

The Curator will identify and recommend significant works to be acquired for the collection and provide supporting documentation to justify their acquisition by gift or purchase. In accordance with institutional policies, they will periodically assess the area of the collection for which they are responsible and make recommendations for the disposition of works of art that should not be retained. They will be responsible for assessing and approving gifts and purchases made by other curators in their department.

Qualifications and Characteristics:

The ideal candidate should have the following experience and qualifications:

- A passion for and deep knowledge of contemporary design, the art, design and craft worlds, and their key players;

- A respected professional among peers, well-connected, and conversant in national and international design circles;
- A demonstrated track record of developing and implementing innovative exhibitions and programming;
- A demonstrated track record identifying institutional needs and priorities, managing and inspiring people, and overseeing operations and budgets in a complex organization;
- Evidence of leadership in and a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusivity;
- Demonstrated success in donor cultivation and fundraising;
- A desire to invest in the regional community, its artists, and its citizens;
- A deep commitment to broad public engagement and programming;
- Adept interpersonal skills; superb oral and written communication skills to present ideas clearly and persuasively;
- Strong financial management to oversee the financial needs of design within a growing institution;
- Demonstrated ability as a strategic thinker, planner, and executor; an operating style that encourages collaboration;
- Diplomatic and collegial, with political savvy and impeccable judgment and discretion;
- Strong personal integrity and work ethic, a positive attitude, and a sense of perspective.

To Apply

The Philadelphia Museum of Art is assisted in this recruitment by the executive search firm Isaacson, Miller. All inquiries and nominations should be directed to the search firm. Please send a CV or resume and a letter of interest in strict confidence to the following:

Sarah James and Quizayra Gonzalez
Isaacson, Miller

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/philadelphia-museum-art/lisa-roberts-and-david-seltzer-curator-modern-and>

Inquiries, nominations, and referrals are also welcome, and will be handled in confidence.

The Philadelphia Museum of Art is an equal access, equal opportunity employer.