

Note: The Buffalo Bill Center of the West plans to host interns in 2021, however, with the often-changing COVID-19 situation, we cannot guarantee it. Please monitor centerofthewest.org/learn/internships/ for updates.

INTERN JOB DESCRIPTION Summer 2021

Department: Whitney Western Art Museum

Supervisor: Karen McWhorter

Intern Title: Curatorial Intern – Western Art

Overview: This internship provides experience to a student exploring career opportunities in art history. The intern will have an assigned project to complete during the defined period of the internship but will also participate in all aspects of curatorial activity for broad exposure to museum functions.

Level of Responsibility: Reports to Curator and Curatorial Assistant, Whitney Western Art Museum; the intern will also interact regularly with other museum departments.

Specific Duties/Responsibilities:

- Attend and participate in Center internship seminar and other activities
- Work alongside curatorial staff on routine tasks that may be of educational value
- Work on one or more of the **specific projects listed below**, as it pertains to skill set and professional or academic interests
- Discuss, on a weekly basis, one to two articles pertaining to related projects, collections care and management, or art news

Collections Research and Management

The Whitney Western Art Museum has recently completed a comprehensive survey of its collections and now seeks to build knowledge around specific artworks and artists in its holdings and reorganize sections of its storage areas. This project may involve the following tasks:

- Conducting traditional art historical and art market research
- Compiling and filing primary and secondary sources related to artworks/artists
- Producing original content about artworks/artists for files and use in interpretation
- Conducting condition reports and moving/rehousing art
- Supporting curatorial staff as they conduct deaccession research

Exhibition Research

The Whitney Western Art Museum is organizing a major traveling exhibition on artist Alfred Jacob Miller (1810 – 1874) and his Scottish patron William Drummond Stewart to open at the Center of the West in 2023. Two minor shows slated to debut in 2022 are also in development. To enhance visitor experience of these exhibitions, the Whitney will create a suite of educational offerings for onsite and online engagement. This project may involve the following tasks:

- Conducting traditional art historical research
- Researching trends in audience engagement and virtual programming
- Producing original content about artworks for use in interpretation

Educational Programming (Virtual Focus)

Engaging museum visitors with educational, interesting, and relevant programming is a critical function of curatorial departments. Increasingly, this engagement is happening virtually. To reach new and wider audiences, the Whitney Western Art Museum seeks to further develop its digital media offerings. This project may involve the following tasks:

- Researching trends in audience engagement and virtual programming
- Researching topic(s) of choice pertaining to collections
- Producing original content for use on the Whitney's social media pages, Center website
- Supporting curatorial staff as they update the Whitney's audio tour, in-gallery and online

Self-Directed Project

Internship candidates are encouraged to research the Whitney Western Art Museum and its history, current projects, and collections to determine what facet of the museum's activities most interests them. Curatorial staff will entertain proposals for self-directed projects that extend or diversify current Whitney activities and draw on an intern's specific skill set and professional or academic interests.

Qualifications:

- Open to advanced undergraduate or graduate-level students in art history or related field
- Previous research experience
- Demonstrated ability to work independently and collaboratively
- Strong interpersonal, communication, and writing skills
- General knowledge of art history
- Specific knowledge of western American art history is helpful

Institutional Goals and Benefits:

- Improving Whitney object files
- Rearranging Whitney collections storage toward a more intuitive organization and improved/safer object housing
- Expediting deaccession research activity
- Creating inclusively sourced educational content for upcoming exhibitions and gallery presentations
- Increasing the Whitney's presence online through the development and sharing of digital media offerings
- Accelerating the process of updating the Whitney's audio guide