



Norton Museum of Art

William and Sarah Ross Soter Senior Curator of Photography

West Palm Beach, FL

William and Sarah Ross Soter Senior Curator of Photography

Norton Museum of Art
West Palm Beach, FL

With a rich history, outstanding collections, beautiful new campus for sharing magnificent art, and groundbreaking programs, The Norton Museum of Art is a source of inspiration, joy, education, and connection for a large circle of artists, supporters, friends, and the people of the Palm Beaches. As the Norton proudly celebrate its 80th anniversary in 2021, they are seeking excellent candidates for the role of **William and Sarah Ross Soter Senior Curator of Photography**.

This individual will be an energetic, captivating, and dynamic curator with a strong base of knowledge in photographic history and deep connections to emerging and contemporary photographers and artists working in new media, to continue the strengthen the national reputation of the Museum's collection and exhibition program and bring them to a level of international acclaim.

About the Norton Museum of Art

The Norton Museum of Art was founded in 1941 by industrialist Ralph Hubbard Norton (1875-1953) and his wife Elizabeth Calhoun Norton (1881-1947). He and his wife began collecting to decorate their home, but then he became interested in art for its own sake and formed a sizable collection of paintings and sculpture. In 1935, Mr. Norton semi-retired and the couple began to spend more time in the Palm Beaches. With their own collection as a foundation, the Nortons ultimately decided to found their own museum in West Palm Beach, giving South Florida its first such institution. In 1940, construction began on the Norton Gallery and School of Art located between South Olive Avenue and South Dixie Highway in West Palm Beach. Mr. Norton commissioned Marion Sims Wyeth of the distinguished firm of Wyeth, King & Johnson to design the Museum. The Art Deco building opened to the public on February 8, 1941. Mr. Norton continued to add to his collection until his death in 1953, and the works that he and his wife gave the Museum form the core of the institution's collection today.

In 2013, with Florida's population dramatically increasing and with Norton Trustees seeing the need for more exhibition and education space, the Board decided to embark on a bold, visionary Museum expansion, enlisting the renowned London-based architectural firm of Foster + Partners to design a new building. The transformed Museum opened on Feb. 9, 2019, featuring the Kenneth C. Griffin Building, which includes 12,000 square feet of new gallery space; expanded classroom space; a larger student exhibition space; a state-of-the art, 210-seat auditorium; a new store and restaurant; and a Great Hall serving as the Museum's "living room." The expansion also includes a lawn for outdoor programming or relaxing, and a sculpture garden. The project also included the renovation of six Museum-owned, 1920s-era cottages to house an

artist-in-residence program, and the Museum Director's home, all to better serve the art and the community.

For more information on the Norton Museum of Art, please visit <http://norton.org>.

The Opportunity

The Norton Museum of Art Curatorial Department is going through a deep re-organization, following the development of the Museum Strategic and I.D.E.A. (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access) plan. The need for exhibitions and programming to be relevant to the community has generated the creation of the Audience Development Committee (ADC) and established a strong collaboration between curators, educators (Learning and Community Engagement Department / LCE), and the Marketing & Communications team. These three departments will present any ideas for upcoming exhibitions or projects together to the ADC, making sure that they will be relevant to the community at large.

Curators will report to the Director & CEO for performance reviews as they focus on four key areas:

- **Content:** The vision and concepts foregrounding exhibitions.
- **Collaboration:** Sharing their vision and concepts to form meaningful programs with LCE and develop meaningful messages with Marketing & Communications to ensure Curatorial projects are relevant to the community.
- **Cultivation:** Engaging with current and future Norton supporters to generate gifts of art, develop collections, attend art fairs, and lead collector groups in addition to continuing to develop the Museum's collection of art.
- **Coordination:** Meeting key milestones in exhibition production and following the curatorial workflow and collection-related procedures created by the Director of Curatorial Operations & Research.

As part of the management of the department, Curators are accountable to the Director of Curatorial Operations & Research (DCO&R) in meeting deadlines that ensure curatorial projects remain on schedule. The DCO&R reports to the Director & CEO and represents the Curatorial Department as a member of the Museum's Senior Staff. This position is responsible for all Curatorial operations and art-based initiatives that relate to the Museum's collection, exhibitions, and archives. The DCO&R also ensures ongoing communication between all museum departments, particularly in relation to the coordination of ADC meetings and presentations. The DCO&R is the Curators' strategic partner, working alongside them, and leading the Curatorial staff team to realize visionary, research-driven curatorial projects and programs.

The Museum's permanent collection consists of more than 8,200 artworks across five collecting areas: American, Chinese, Contemporary, European, and Photography. The bulk of the

Photography Collection dates from the late 19th century to today, but the core of the collection centers on a gift from Baroness Jeane von Oppenheim. The gift helped establish the collection in 2000 after the Baroness gifted nearly 800 objects in 1998. Overseeing the Photography Collection, consisting of approximately 4,600 images, the **William and Sarah Ross Soter Senior Curator of Photography** is responsible for developing a relevant program of innovative and original exhibitions, in collaboration with LCE and Marketing & Communications.

The **William and Sarah Ross Soter Senior Curator of Photography** must demonstrate in-depth awareness of photography, video art, and new media. They must be able to propose acquisitions that will enhance the Norton's collection of photo-based art and represent the important stylistic developments from the 19th century to present day, inclusive of works by emerging and contemporary artists, within the context of the museum's historical collection. They will also be critical in introducing those works to the Norton's Works of Art Committee (WoAC) in their oversight of acquisitions.

The **William and Sarah Ross Soter Senior Curator of Photography** will collaborate with the Director & CEO, the Chief Development Officer, and colleagues in Development to generate financial support of photography and related media through donor visits and grant and foundation applications; as well as working to develop, expand, and sustain the Photography Committee, one of four collector groups at the Norton that consists of sophisticated collectors and enthusiasts who expect appealing programming that engages the vast and significant collectors in this community.

The **William and Sarah Ross Soter Senior Curator of Photography** must be able to suggest, create, and conduct engaging programming through professional connections and propose adventurous ideas with LCE and Marketing & Communications colleagues.

The individual in this position must be familiar with requirements and approximate costs to realize exhibitions and be able to complete projects on time and within budgets, being accountable to the DCO&R on these matters. Additionally, they must be familiar with expenses associated with special installation requirements, honoraria, artist fees, and transportation.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

In the following areas, the **William and Sarah Ross Soter Senior Curator of Photography** will:

Curatorial

- Create and organize exhibitions (including permanent collection rotations and traveling exhibitions) based on rigorous research and original ideas.
- In the development of exhibitions, present a holistic project proposal that collaboratively incorporates educational and marketing programming, to be presented twice a year to the Audience Development Committee (ADC).
- Following a schedule developed by the DCO&R, conduct research and write all exhibition didactics including introductory texts, labels, brochures, and, when budgeted, supporting catalogues.
- Act as coordinating curator, in collaboration with the DCO&R, for guest-curated or other traveling exhibitions.
- Determine the layout of exhibitions and, together with the DCO&R, Head of Installation, and the Graphic Designer, develop the exhibition design as well as installation schedule.
- Assist in identifying and securing exhibition venues for traveling exhibitions.
- In collaboration with the DCO&R and curatorial department staff, oversee installation of permanent collection galleries.
- With Director & CEO, develop and revise the Museum's Collection Development Strategy for expanding the collection, as well as make recommendations for acquisitions, write justifications, and present to the Works of Art Committee (WoAC).
- Conduct public lectures on exhibitions and collection; create engaging digital programs and online content; and build outreach to local, regional, and national and international communities for audience development.
- Assist with the Norton's Artist in Residency (AiR) program.
- Build and maintain relationships with artists, dealers, curators, directors, critics, and journalists.
- Together with DCO&R, examine the condition of the photography collection and work with registrars to determine conservation needs. Manage and oversee conservation projects from start to finish as well as suggesting de-accessioning plan in accordance with the Museum's Collection Management Policy.

Cultivation/Fundraising

- Develop and maintain relationships with collectors, donors, private funders, and foundations.
- Assist with solicitation of funds for acquisitions in conjunction with Director & CEO and Chief Development Officer.

- Represent the museum at national and international art fairs, biennials, exhibition openings, and other contemporary art world events.
- Visit private collections and work to sustain interest in the Norton.
- Work closely with the Director & CEO to cultivate donors in order to receive gifts of art that will increase the quality of the Norton permanent collection.
- Assist Chief Development Officer, Director of Institutional Giving, and staff in writing grants for curatorial projects.

Qualifications

Strong candidates for the **William and Sarah Ross Soter Senior Curator of Photography** position will possess:

- A minimum of 10 years' experience with a history of innovative and meaningful exhibitions.
- Excellent writing skills demonstrated by authorship of publications or associated texts on various media platforms, as well as strong public speaking skills and the development of lectures that contribute to meaningful dialogue within the contemporary art world.
- Familiarity with international art fairs, contemporary and photography galleries, and alternative, independent spaces.
- Experience coordinating exhibitions from other institutions, smaller spotlight projects and installing collection galleries.
- Strong collaboration skills and knowledge of current best practices.
- Awareness of, and professional associations and connections with, colleagues nationally (and internationally) at other public and private institutions, as well as with the exhibitions and projects being organized by colleagues.
- Experience facilitating national and international loans.

Note: Nothing in this job description restricts management's rights to assign or reassign duties and responsibilities to this job at any time.

About Palm Beach County, Florida

Palm Beach County is the fourth most populous in Florida and is home to 1.49 million people with a population that includes 30% people of color. One-third of the households in Palm Beach County speak a non-English language at home as their primary language. The county is also economically diverse, with an important group of 12% of the population that the museum serves falling below the poverty line. Palm Beach County is a vibrant and diverse collection of communities, of which the famous and well-known city of Palm Beach is just a small part. The largest city is West Palm Beach, home to a thriving arts community, a vibrant downtown, and all

the culture and amenities you would expect in a major city. The metroplex of South Florida has a population of more than 6 million people.

Compensation & Benefits

Salary is competitive and commensurate with experience.

Contact

Koya Partners, the executive search firm that specializes in mission-driven search, has been exclusively retained for this engagement. Naree W. S. Viner and Tenley Bank of Koya Partners are the search team for this assignment. To express interest in this role, please submit your materials directly to Tenley at tbank@koyapartners.com. All inquiries and discussions will be considered strictly confidential.

.....

The Norton Museum of Art is an Equal Opportunity Employer and celebrates a diverse team of talented staff and volunteers.

About Koya Partners

Koya Partners, a part of Diversified Search Group, is a leading executive search and strategic advising firm dedicated to connecting exceptionally talented people with mission-driven clients. Our founding philosophy—**The Right Person in the Right Place Can Change the World**—guides our work as we partner with nonprofits & NGOs, institutions of higher education, responsible businesses, and social enterprises in local communities and around the world.

For more information about Koya Partners, visit www.koyapartners.com.