Careers in Art History

Archivist

**Job Description:** Combines the talents of a librarian, including acquiring and making available physical records of history, with the skills of a conservator, such as preserving and protecting documents for future generations. Requires M.A. plus M.L.I.S.

**Salary:**

Art Critic

**Job Description:** Attempts to make art more accessible to the general public by reviewing exhibitions (much like a movie critic), writing biographical profiles of artists for popular magazines, and publishing thoughtful essays about art. Requires B.A. at minimum; M.A. more common.

**Salary:**

Art Licensing

**Job Description:** Oversees the legal and financial aspects of visual arts in the world of publishing. This career will continue to morph as electronic media expand their reach in a world where copyright and intellectual property laws are under attack. Requires M.A. plus legal training.

**Salary:**

Arts Administrator

**Job Description:** Covers a wide range of duties depending on the size and scope of the artistic organization. Possibilities include acting as a liaison with technical and curatorial staff; overseeing maintenance of the physical structures; managing budgets; communicating policy with outside agencies. Requires M.A. plus M.P.A or similar.

**Salary:**

Auction House Cataloger

**Job Description:** Responsible for writing the descriptions of works for the auction catalog, including physical description, provenance, exhibition history and literature references. Requires M.A.

**Salary:**

Auction House Subject Specialist

**Job Description:** Assists with the preparation of works for sale. Identify and authenticate works either as a generalist or a specialist. Can be part-time. Requires M.A. or Ph.D.

**Salary:**

Auctioneer

**Job Description:** Combines commercial and academic expertise to identify and sell fine arts, antiques and collectables. B.A. is minimum; M.A. desirable.

**Salary:**

Conservator

**Job Description:** All works of art deteriorate. A conservator’s primary concern is to slow the rate of deterioration. The care and preservation of works of art can be subdivided into a variety of specialties, including

- Preventative conservation; manipulating the environment in which a work is stored or viewed.
- Direct preservation treatment, either physical or chemical; restoring an object to an original or prior state.
- Focus on moveable cultural properties; museum collections.
• Focus on the built environment; architectural preservation.
• Focus on materials: ceramics and glass; paintings; paper; textiles; wood, etc.
Requires M.A. or Ph.D. plus advanced conservation training.

**Salary:**

**Educator:** Museum or Local History Site

**Job Description:** In a small museum there may be only one person charged to work with visitors ranging from elementary school children to local politicians. Larger organizations will require subject expertise. Requires M.A. or Ph.D.

**Salary:**

**Events Manager**

**Job Description:** Organize special exhibitions, receptions, gallery gatherings, corporate events and other activities for the public. Requires M.A.; M.P.A. or similar desirable.

**Salary:**

**Independent Scholar**

**Job Description:** Sometimes known as “Freelance Scholars,” this role allows a person to teach, curate, research, deliver papers at professional meetings, and pursue many other activities without being permanently attached to a university, museum or other organization. Requires Ph.D.

**Salary:**

**Museum or Gallery Curator**

**Job Description:** Oversees the day-to-day care of collections and art works, researches works for display or sale, engages visitors or customers in the appreciation of specific works and art in general. Requires Ph.D. unless at a very small institution.

**Salary:**

**Museum Registrar**

**Job Description:** Keep records on each objects in the collection, including when acquired, when exhibited, when lent to other institutions, and so forth. Coordinates risk management and various legal matters such as de-accessioning works from the collection. Requires M.A. plus legal training.

**Salary:**

**Teacher: Higher Education**

**Job Description:** Classroom teaching, research and publishing, serving on university committees, possible administrative duties. Requires Ph.D. for a 4-year institution; perhaps M.A. for community college.

**Salary:**

**Tour Guide / Lecturer**

**Job Description:** Includes not only extensive knowledge of specific works of art but also intimate understanding of individual museums and their policies; cities and their dangers (and excitements); and human behavior in crowds of tourist. M.A. desirable.

**Salary:**

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