



CURATOR

CARL & MARILYNN THOMA ART FOUNDATION

Chicago, Illinois

[Carl & Marilynn Thoma Art Foundation](#)



The Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with the Carl & Marilynn Thoma Art Foundation in the search for a Curator.

The Carl & Marilynn Thoma Art Foundation seeks a Curator to oversee its non-digital art collections, Post-War Abstract Painting and Art of the Spanish Americas, as well as to assist with the grants process and promote the foundation. The Curator will contribute to the shaping and execution of the foundation's vision and delivery on its mission as it moves to the next phases of growth.

The Curator will utilize excellent interpersonal skills and a dynamic personality to cultivate relationships that lead to new partnerships with art organizations and museums around the world. This includes being a visible and active member of the national and international art community which will require monthly domestic and international travel to South America and Spain. The successful Curator will have experience working in a creative entrepreneurial organization that requires thinking dynamically about the future while also being effective in the present. Recent PhD graduates, with the interest and drive to work outside of academia or strictly curating, are encouraged to apply. The foundation team includes four staff in Chicago and three in Santa Fe.

The Carl & Marilynn Thoma Art Foundation recognizes the power of the arts to challenge and shift perceptions, spark creativity, and connect people across cultures. The foundation lends and exhibits artworks from its collection and provides grants to support innovative individuals and projects in its collection areas (Digital & Electronic, Post-War Abstract Painting, Art of the Spanish Americas, and Japanese Bamboo).

The foundation's Chicago space in West Town is dedicated to presenting works from the foundation's art collection. In Santa Fe, the foundation has a public exhibition space, Art House, where it has seasonal rotations of artworks from its collection and hosts related educational programming. The foundation is opening a public exhibition space in Scottsdale in late 2019.

The foundation identifies individuals and organizations that are actively pursuing promising lines of art inquiry that align with its collection areas. It researches and awards those who employ originality and entrepreneurial approaches in their work. Programs include grants to support 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts organizations and academic programs with exhibitions, publications, endowments, and convening opportunities; artwork loans from the collection to museums and venues around the world; exhibitions at the Thoma Foundation spaces, Art House in Santa Fe and Orange Door in Chicago; awards and fellowships to support individuals with artist projects, arts writing, curatorial research, and performances; and education programs for learners of all ages, such as lectures, symposia, and class visits to the exhibition spaces.

THE COLLECTIONS

Carl and Marilyn Thoma have been collecting art since 1975. They believe passionately in the power of art to enrich life and to deepen understanding of the cultures, places, and times of which we are a part. In 1986, the Thomases established a family foundation to fulfill their broad passion for philanthropy. Inspired to make contributions with wide-ranging yet personal impact, in 2014, the Thomases went on to found the Carl & Marilyn Thoma Art Foundation to distinguish their initiatives in, and support of, visual art. As their collections have evolved, they have contributed increasingly with their personal involvement and financial support to the development of exhibitions, symposia and publications, the formation of fellowships and awards, and the endowment of professorial chairs and curatorial positions. The Curator will oversee the foundation's non-digital collections which include Post-War Abstract Painting and Art of the Spanish Americas.

Post-War Abstract Painting. The Thoma Collection of Abstract Painting highlights new forms of color-based abstraction developed in the late 1950s and 60s in response to Abstract Expressionism. 73 artists and 162 works associated with terms like Color Field, Post-Painterly Abstraction, Hard-Edge, Finish Fetish, Washington Color School, Perceptual Abstraction, Op Art, and Minimalism define this historically significant collection.

Art of the Spanish Americas. The collection of Spanish Colonial or Art of the Spanish Americas art numbers more than 130 works from the 17th–19th centuries, principally paintings from South America. The collection includes religious themes and portraits from the Viceroyalty of Peru. Upwards of 50% of the works are on loan to various museums to include the AIC, The Met, HFA, and Blanton. Several exhibitions are in the planning phase. The foundation continues to collect, and the collection is believed to be the largest in private hands. Eventually the collection will be donated to museums in the Americas. The paintings are mostly acquired in Spain so travel to Spain takes place a couple times a year. Conservation is part of any acquisition. Active interface with museums and travel to South America annually to research and promote the collection is critical. Additional scholarship, documentation, organization, and thoughts on disposition are needed as well. At any one time there are always several paintings under study and consideration for purchase.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Curator will report to Carl Thoma.

PRINCIPAL OPPORTUNITIES

This is a unique opportunity at a growing institution. The Curator's position at the foundation is second only to the founders and the successful candidate will play a lead role in determining the ultimate homes of the collection over the next ten years.

This position offers the opportunity to grow into the role of Executive Director of the foundation, a role that demands innovative insights and documentation of the collections, excellent relationships with key contacts around the world as they relate to the collection and granting, and a respected relationship with colleagues at the foundation.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Curator will

- oversee the research, documentation, and promotion of the Post-War Abstract Painting and Art of the Spanish Americas collections;
- cultivate relationships with peer institutions domestically and internationally;
- in partnership with the founders, participate in the grant process and decisions that relate to the three collection areas of responsibility (up to \$2 million per year is granted in these three areas in aggregate); and
- provide support to the founders on special projects.

KEY COLLEAGUES



Carl and Marilynn Thoma

Founders

Carl Thoma is an art collector, philanthropist and managing partner, and founder of Thoma Bravo, LLC. An early player in the field of venture capital beginning with Golder, Thoma in 1980, Carl has applied his eye for entrepreneurial talent to collecting Modern and Contemporary paintings, and most recently in the fields of Digital Art and Light and Space. In his chosen profession, Carl has been acknowledged in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Business Week*, and *Fortune* for his investment leadership. He has chaired the National Venture Capital Association and the Illinois Venture Capital Association, and served on the boards of Illinois Institute of Technology and Stanford Graduate School of Business Advisory Council. He is currently on the Boards of the McKnight Center for the Performing Arts, the Terra Foundation for American Art, and SITE Santa Fe; is a member of the Blanton National Leadership Board; and is a commissioner for the National Portrait Gallery. He earned his bachelor's degree from Oklahoma State University and his MBA from Stanford's Graduate School of Business.

Marilynn Thoma is an active art collector and has a strong interest in the governance of art museums and foundations. Her Spanish colonial collection has been exhibited internationally, and most recently in the *Voyage to South America* exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago. In Chicago, Marilynn serves on the Boards of the Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Chicago Humanities Festival, and the Art Institute of Chicago. Marilynn is a current member of the Blanton National Leadership Board. She was an active council or advisory member at the Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University, Oklahoma State University Museum of Art, Museum of New Mexico Foundation, and the Hadley Institute for the Blind and Impaired. Professionally, Marilynn had overseen the marketing of Van Duzer Vineyards, an 80-acre estate Pinot Noir winery in Oregon that the Thomas founded in 1998. She began her career in brand management at Quaker Oats Company in Chicago following her MBA from Stanford. Like her husband, Marilynn Thoma graduated from Oklahoma State University.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

The Carl & Marilyn Thoma Art Foundation seeks a Curator with

- excellent interpersonal skills, a dynamic personality, and the ability to cultivate relationships that lead to new partnerships with art organizations and museums;
- curatorial experience working in a creative entrepreneurial organization that requires thinking dynamically about the future while also being effective in the present;
- superior research, written, and verbal communication skills;
- a self-directed temperament and self-motivation with the ability to execute on plans independent of direction; and
- the creativity and confidence to propose new ideas.

A PhD in Art History or a related field is required for this position as is three years of curatorial experience. The successful candidate should be fluent in Spanish, written and verbal, with translation experience.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Employees are hired based solely on Carl & Marilyn Thoma Art Foundation personnel requirements and the qualifications of each individual candidate. The foundation does not tolerate nor condone discrimination due to age, race, color, religion, sex, national origin or disability. It will comply with the spirit and letter of all local, state, and federal laws pertaining to employment.

SALARY & BENEFITS

The Carl & Marilyn Thoma Art Foundation offers a competitive salary and package of employee benefits.

LOCATION

This position is located in Chicago, Illinois.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. Before submitting your materials, please read them over for accuracy. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the successful candidate has been selected.

To apply for this position, visit:

[Curator, Carl & Marilyn Thoma Art Foundation.](#)

To nominate a candidate, please contact Ron Schiller

[ronschiller@aspenleadershipgroup.com.](mailto:ronschiller@aspenleadershipgroup.com)

All inquiries will be held in confidence.