



The
Robert
McLaughlin
Gallery

JOB CALL: ASSISTANT CURATOR - MAMANAW PEKISKWEWINA | MOTHER TONGUES

9 Month Contract (June 2021 – February 2022)

Wage: \$20/hr

Application deadline: **May 9, 2021**

Start date: June 7, 2021

The Robert McLaughlin Gallery (The RMG) is seeking applications from Indigenous artists and arts-workers from across Southern Ontario to join our curatorial team for a 9-month contract. The Assistant Curator will work in collaboration with TRUCK Contemporary Art's Curatorial Resident to develop and deliver the Aazhawayi'ing/Oshawa iteration of the project *Mamanaw Pekiskwewina | Mother Tongues*.

Job description

The Mamanaw Pekiskwewina | Mother Tongues Assistant Curator is a 9-month contract position at The RMG specifically designated for a local emerging Indigenous curator. The assistant curator will assist in the researching and designing of community-centred arts programming to accompany the exhibition *Taskoch pison kona kah nipa muskoseya, nepin pesim eti pimachihew | Like the winter snow kills the grass, the summer sun revives it*—curated by Missy LeBlanc and presented in partnership with TRUCK Contemporary Art in Calgary.

The assistant curator will work in partnership and under the mentorship of Missy LeBlanc + the Senior Curator (RMG) to develop ancillary programming that centres community and relationship building and explores the theme of Indigenous languages in Southern Ontario. This project has a limited but flexible budget, which can be used to develop programming such as public art projects, gatherings, talks, community art builds, and/or small publications. The focus of the position will be developing and coordinating the *Mamanaw Pekiskwewina | Mother Tongues* project. The assistant curator will also work alongside the curatorial team at the RMG to produce exhibitions and programming. Although it would be an asset, previous curatorial experience is not required for this position.

The assistant curator will have the option to work remotely and will be provided with a laptop and administrative resources necessary to do so. This position reports directly to the Senior Curator at The RMG and will be provided with mentorship and support through the Indigenous Curatorial Collective.

Responsibilities

- Developing a project scope, timeline for research and milestones in collaboration with Missy LeBlanc and the Senior Curator
- Researching histories and understandings of Indigenous language in Southern Ontario in conjunction with LeBlanc's own research
- Communicating with fellow nonprofits, local artists, educators, band offices, and community organizers to build relationships leading to program development
- Designing programs in collaboration with LeBlanc that fit within The RMG's project budget and timeline
- Providing progress updates to The RMG's Senior Curator and Programming Team on a regular basis
- Working with the Senior Curator to carry out programs, artist communications, contracts, writing/editing and event logistics/planning as determined by the project's design
- Assist with coordinating community partners, program participants, artists involved in the project
- Working in collaboration with LeBlanc to develop any project writing/descriptions/branding, etc.
- Support additional curatorial projects such as installations, exhibition coordination, collections research ect.

Qualifications

- Of Indigenous descent with close ties to Anishnaabe, Mississauga, Haudenosaunee or Wendat Nations (ancestral ties to one of these Nations are not required, but applicants should reside in Southern Ontario and hopefully have existing relationships and community connections here)
- An intimate knowledge of contemporary art and community engagement
- A working knowledge of Indigenous art practices and/or a willingness to learn
- Some skills related to curation (though prior curatorial experience is not required)
- Prior research experience (personal/artistic research or in an academic context)
- Any experience with event planning or community organizing will be considered an asset
- Excellent written, communication, administrative and organizational skills
- Organized and able to set their own tasks and deadlines
- Creative, adaptable and eager to work in a collaborative environment
- Must be living in the Southern Ontario region for the duration of the project
- Must be 30 years of age or younger on start date of contract

Working Conditions

- Full-time hours (35hr/week) typically Monday-Friday, occasional evening or weekend
- Working remotely is an option or a workspace will be provided at the gallery

- Ability to be onsite during installations, programs or events as determined by the project scope

The Robert McLaughlin Gallery is an equal opportunity employer and encourages applications from qualified candidates from visible and invisible minority group members, women, Indigenous persons, persons with disabilities, persons across the spectrum of sexual orientation and gender identities and others with the skills and knowledge to productively engage with diverse communities. We are committed to hiring on merit and to removing barriers in employment policies.

Should you require accommodation during the application or interview process, please let us know and we will work with you to meet your needs.

Application deadline: May 9, 2021

To apply please forward your cover letter and resume to communications@rmg.on.ca in a single PDF document. Please note that we will only reply to candidates selected for consideration and interview.

Thank you for your interest in joining us at the RMG!

PROJECT BACKGROUND

[*Mamanaw Pekiskwewina | Mother Tongues*](#) was first conceived as an offsite exhibition at the Calgary Central Library from October-December, 2019. It was presented in concert with [*Taskoch pipon kona kah nipa muskoseya, nepin pesim eti pimachihew | Like the winter snow kills the grass, the summer sun revives it*](#), an exhibition at TRUCK Contemporary Art in November/December 2019. The original iteration of *Mamanaw Pekiskwewina* brought together emerging artists from the four Indigenous language groups of the Treaty 7 region—Nakoda, nēhiyawēwin, Nitsiipowahsiin, and Tsuut'ina—who incorporate their ancestral languages into their practice. The exhibition gave space back to the First Nation communities of the area, while asserting that the Indigenous lands that we occupy carry specific language traditions that root us to this land and still flow through us.

For the tour of *Taskoch pipon kona kah nipa muskoseya, nepin pesim eti pimachihew | Like the winter snow kills the grass, the summer sun revives it* across so-called Canada, the relationship between the exhibitions had to be reimagined; rather than a specific offsite exhibition, *Mamanaw Pekiskwewina* has been adapted to act as a framework of engagement for right relations to the localities of each of the tour locations. Each of the host organizations will utilize the *Mamanaw Pekiskwewina* framework—aided by an Indigenous Assistant Curator who has ties to the region—to develop programming that engages with the local Indigenous community and their language revitalization efforts. The definition of 'local' for this project has moved away from civic borders and the colonial understanding to one that is more region based and defined in consultation with the Indigenous people that currently and historically reside on the land the host organizations occupy.

One of the main intentions of the *Mamanaw Pekiskwewina* is for the host organization to engage with the local Indigenous community and be responsive to their needs when it comes to supporting language revitalization efforts through art. The hope is that this engagement will spark long-term institutional change with the host organization by supporting Indigenous cultural workers and artists as well as building a dialogical, reciprocal, and sustainable relationship with the Indigenous community at-large while taking into account the specificity of the language traditions of the land.