The Royal Household

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: Art Technician (Paintings)

DEPARTMENT: Royal Collection Trust

SECTION/BRANCH: Paintings/Pictures

LOCATION: St James's Palace Friary Court Studio

REPORTING TO: Head of Display and Framing of Pictures

Job Context

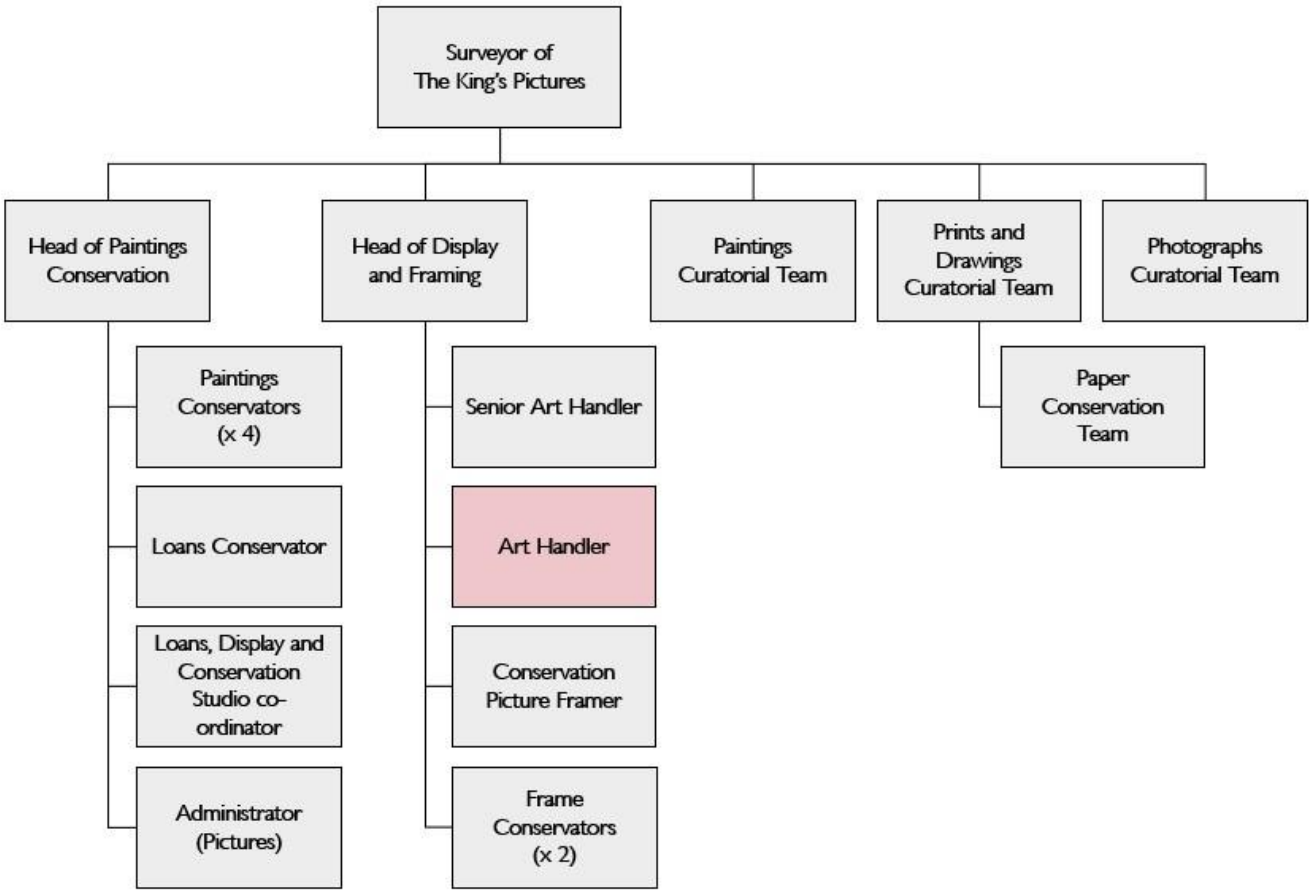
Royal Collection Trust is charged with the care and preservation of the Royal Collection and its presentation to the public. The Royal Collection is one of the largest and most important art collections in the world. It comprises almost all aspects of the fine and decorative arts, runs to more than a million objects and is spread among 15 royal residences and former residences across the UK. At The King's Galleries in London and Edinburgh aspects of the Collection are displayed in a programme of temporary exhibitions. Many works from the Collection are on long-term loan to institutions throughout the UK, and short-term loans are regularly made to exhibitions around the world as part of a commitment to broaden public access and to show parts of the Collection in new contexts. The works of art in the Royal Collection are held by The King in trust for his successors and the nation.

Royal Collection Trust is responsible for the management and financial administration of the public opening of Buckingham Palace (including The King's Gallery, the Royal Mews and Clarence House), Windsor Castle and the Palace of Holyroodhouse (including The King's Gallery). The monies generated from admissions, and from associated commercial activities are invested in the care and conservation of the Royal Collection and the promotion of access and enjoyment through exhibitions, publications, loans and educational activities.

The Paintings section is part of the Pictures branch of the Royal Collection. It is responsible for the management, safety, conservation, display and interpretation of all paintings, miniatures, and frames in the Collection. It includes curatorial staff, conservators and art handlers who are split across three sites – St James's Palace, Windsor Castle and the Palace of Holyroodhouse. The branch works with colleagues within the Royal Collection on the presentation of the palaces open to the public and on the temporary exhibitions at The King's Galleries in Edinburgh and Buckingham Palace. The Framing and Display team support the curators and conservators in the care of the collection and delivery of an ambitious exhibitions and loans programme. In addition to installing exhibitions in the two King's Galleries in London and Edinburgh and preparing paintings in the studios in Windsor and London, picture moves are carried out throughout the residences (including those managed by English Heritage and Historic Royal Palaces and in private use). Department staff also act as couriers nationally and internationally.

Organisational Chart

The post-holder is line managed by the Head of Display and Framing of Pictures. Internally, the job holder has contact with all levels of Royal household staff and occasionally members of the Royal Family. Externally, the job holder has contact with conservators, museums and house managers as well as freelance technicians and transport companies.



Job Purpose

The post-holder will be part of the team responsible for delivering the complex series of picture moves and substitutions required to enable the busy Royal Collection exhibitions, loans and display programme. The team is also responsible for ensuring paintings are suitably protected to ensure the conservation of the collection, while facilitating the operational requirements of the Royal Household.

This involves working in Royal residences throughout the UK, Royal Collection stores and conservation studios. The post-holder will be working with freelance and specialist art handlers from outside the organization, and suitably trained staff within the Royal Household.

The post-holder will select the best materials, methods and equipment for their areas of responsibility. They will work closely and collaboratively with key internal and external stakeholders, and will be supported and trained in the role by experts in their fields, as required.

Principal Accountabilities

- Supervise and work with employees of specialist art handling companies, freelance staff and Royal Household staff when handling, installing, packing and transporting paintings.
- Under direction, assist with the preparation of frames and the process of framing paintings to conservation standards.
- Work closely with packing case suppliers and transport managers to ensure the best conservation standards and practices are applied during the transport of paintings.
- Produce method statements and risk assessments as required.
- Record picture moves for entry on the collections management inventory system.
- Be responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of equipment, ensuring Health and Safety requirements are met.

Job Dimensions

The job holder has no line management or budgetary responsibilities but will supervise freelance and contract staff in the course of their duties.

Decision Making Responsibilities

The post-holder is required to resolve matters that occur on a day-to-day basis and refer non-routine problems to the Senior Art Handler, Curators or Conservators

Practical Requirements

The post-holder is principally based at St. James's Palace, Friary Court Studio, but travels regularly out to RCT Windsor sites and more widely around the country working on the collection. The post-holder will regularly be required to work away from home, usually for no longer than five days at a time and will sometimes start and end the day at different locations. A shared vehicle is available to facilitate this.

Due to the nature of the role, the post-holder will occasionally be required to be flexible regarding working hours, with time off in lieu offered as appropriate.

Person Specification

Essential

- Art handling experience working with large, framed oil paintings on canvas and panel
- Competent, experienced and confident working at height from both ladders and access equipment
- Knowledge of methods of installing and transporting large fragile paintings and the selection of appropriate materials, methods and equipment required
- Good administrative, organisational and communication skills
- Ability to prioritise workload and to work calmly to complex and tight deadlines
- Excellent interpersonal skills to work within a small team
- Ability to work independently and make decisions as needed
- In possession of a clean driving license and ability to drive a van

Desirable

- Wood working skills
- A good understanding of the field of conservation and its aims and ethics

This document is not contractual and may be subject to change following consultation with the post-holder.

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