

## CURATOR of American Women's Music, IS-1015-12

### INTRODUCTION

This position is a joint appointment between the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage (CFCH) and Smithsonian Music (SM). The purpose of the position is to serve as Curator of American Women's Music with the primary responsibilities of conceiving, conceptualizing, developing, and implementing music initiatives about American women's history. The incumbent works largely on her/his own initiative and will be under the direct supervision of the CFCH chief curator in close consultation with Smithsonian Music.

### DUTIES

1. **Curation:** Researches and curates music through the lens of women's history, focusing on performance, collections, the American music industry, intangible cultural heritage, and connections between diverse populations. Conceptualizes and executes research projects that reflect key questions in music and women's history, leading to online and offline publications, playlists, editorial work, and/or exhibitions across Smithsonian units. Creates quarterly multimedia features that employ the digital curation of music collections, photographs, and video materials. Works with pan-institutional partners to consult and contribute to curatorial endeavors that represent collections from CFCH and alongside those of other Smithsonian units, such as FSG, NMAAHC, NMAH, and SAAM. (40%)
2. **Research-based programming, training, and outreach:** Works independently, but collaborates closely with CFCH's chief curator, as well as with Smithsonian Music, CFCH, and other pan-institutional colleagues, to design, curate, and/or coordinate presentations and programs about women's music history at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival on the National Mall or in Smithsonian units. Contributes as a presenter, organizer, or coordinator of programs organized by others. Serves as a supervisor to fellows, post-docs, interns, or graduate students. Serves on CFCH and pan-institutional committees, representing CFCH and American women's music history content. Participates in conferences and symposia of professional organizations. Writes, edits, and/or otherwise contributes to manuscripts. (20%)
3. **Pan-institutional collaboration:** Cooperates with units and museums across the Smithsonian to represent women's music history in programs, exhibitions, publications, and content features. Draws threads between various music collections across the institution to create compelling narratives about women and music. Works directly with Smithsonian Music's pan-institutional committee to support the representation of women's music in online and offline publications, and programs, content features, events, grant proposals, and strategic development activities. Serves as part-time curator of American women's music history during the Smithsonian Year of Music in 2019. Collaborates closely with the Smithsonian Music executive committee and the Smithsonian Year of Music core team. (20%)
4. **Resource Development:** Helps conceive, conceptualize, and develop proposals for funding and other efforts to secure resources needed to support women's musical history efforts at CFCH and the Smithsonian as a whole. Works closely with the director as well as curatorial, development, and administrative staff to ensure the effective development of funding proposals to foundations, corporations, individuals, and other sources. Focuses principally on crafting and/or reviewing

proposal narratives, though collaborates effectively with colleagues on budget development and approach strategy as well. Writing funding proposals may include writing non-technical proposal sections for grants or donations that include budgets with salaries and benefits, management, outreach, and diversity plans, and overhead for multiple departments at a research university, liberal arts college, large museum complex with multiple organizations, or a large, multi-disciplinary non-profit organization. (20%)

Performs other duties as assigned.

### **KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY THE POSITION**

Knowledge of (ethno)musicology, women's musical history, community collaborations, intangible cultural heritage, archival collections, and strategies for representing living traditional cultures.

Knowledge of women in the American music industry and a basic understanding of cultural policies, such as intellectual property law, that affect the lives and livelihoods of musicians.

Knowledge of multimedia platforms that can enhance public engagement with women's music history collections and publications, gained through work experience.

Knowledge of the music field, viewed through an interdisciplinary perspective, with an advanced degree in music, humanities, anthropology, or related field.

Knowledge of traditional music expressions and (ethno)musicology documentary techniques, such as photography, video, or audio recordings to facilitate planning of cultural events.

Knowledge of planning/producing public music programs—such as a speaker series, festival events, and media products—that focus on living traditional cultures and offer cross-cultural interpretation, having significant public impact.

Ability to perform scholarly research, analyzing and synthesizing a large amount of information and data.

Ability to plan, curate, author, edit, and produce multimedia features, exhibitions, or programs documenting women in American music history, gained through work experience.

Ability to work collaboratively to coordinate publications and program production.

Knowledge of music collections and musicians represented in the Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives and Collections, as well as in other Smithsonian units.

Ability to review and develop research ideas into educational exhibitions/programs and into viable, compelling funding proposals.

Ability to carry out field research documentation and to prepare results for archival preservation.

### **SUPERVISORY CONTROLS**

Works under the direct supervision of the CFCH chief curator, with guidance and input from Smithsonian Music. The incumbent exercises a great deal of independence in carrying out the work, advising the director of Smithsonian Folkways on a regular basis, informing him of potentially sensitive situations and recommending strategies for responding. The incumbent is responsible for recommending plans and tactics to achieve desired goals and for determining priority among conflicting work requirements. The supervisor and the chair of Smithsonian Music review final work for curation, research, and programmatic accomplishments.

### **GUIDELINES**

Follows established SI policy and procedures and broad policy guidelines established by the Director of CFCH and the Provost/Under Secretary for Museums and Research. Since the guidelines typically deal only with general policy, the incumbent has wide latitude in determining the approach to specific problems and goals. Incumbent must use seasoned judgment, knowledge, and substantial creativity to accomplish the work.

### **COMPLEXITY**

The incumbent must be capable of planning and directing work in a variety of concurrent activities across the spectrum of functions cited herein. Incumbent serves as authoritative reference source within the area of women's music history. The incumbent makes significant contributions to all programming decisions and long-range planning, and must be fully cognizant of current activities and future trends, communicate them to the program staff, and provide strong programmatic leadership.

### **SCOPE AND EFFECT**

The purpose of the position is to serve as music curator with the primary responsibilities of conceiving, conceptualizing, developing and implementing music publications and programs in American women's history. The impact of the work is to enable the Smithsonian to have successful curatorial reach, programming, and engagement in women's music history.

### **PERSONAL CONTACTS**

Incumbent will be in contact with a wide variety of Smithsonian personnel, outside scholars, museum officials and professionals, the diplomatic corps, heads of state, national and international organizations, federal agencies, foreign ministries and funding organizations, musicians, collectors, community-based culture bearers, and the general public.

### **PURPOSE OF CONTACTS**

To obtain and exchange information that furthers music and cultural heritage programs of the institution. To foster pan-institutional collaboration, awareness, and celebration of issues concerning women and music, bolstering the profile of collections across multiple Smithsonian units. While some contacts are routine, others are very sensitive in nature, require the utmost tact, diplomacy, and cultural understanding, with an aim toward optimal collaborative collegiality.

### **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

Work is a primarily sedentary office environment. Incumbent will be required to travel and to conduct field research, and is often subject to the pressure of deadlines or other restrictions.

## **WORK ENVIRONMENT**

Work is normally performed in an office environment but may be in the open during Folklife Festival activities. No substantial environmental hazards are present in day-to-day situations.