



## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Role / Title:** Archivist

**Reports to:** Head of Collections

**Manages:** Volunteers and work placements as required

**Liaises with:** All ROH departments, off-site storage facilities, shipping companies, conservators and special suppliers

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### **Overall Purpose of the Job:**

This Archivist will participate in the full range of activities to ensure the preservation, management and development of, and engagement with, the Royal Ballet and Opera Collections. They will join the Collections team which comprises the Head of Collections, three Archivists and an Archive Apprentice.

They will develop a sound understanding of the Collections and the history of the Royal Ballet and Opera, using this knowledge to appraise and acquire new material. They will undertake activities to ensure the care and preservation of the archives and objects stored at the Covent Garden and Purfleet sites and will have responsibility for the management of the collections housed with DeepStore in Cheshire. They will catalogue collections to agreed standards using the Axiell Collections CMS. They will encourage access by developing and participating in public engagement activities, and by providing information and research services for internal and external users.

### **Key Responsibilities:**

#### *Acquisitions:*

- Appraise material offered to the Collections in relation to the Acquisition and Disposal Policy and make recommendations to the team.
- Manage the deposit, donation and purchase of archives from RBO departments and external sources. Including liaising with staff, managing donor relationships, preparing legal documents and maintaining the Accessions database.

#### *Collections Management:*

- Undertake the full range of activities to ensure the care, preservation and conservation of the archives and objects in the RBO Collections.
- Oversee the management of the collections stored with DeepStore in Cheshire. Including maintaining manuals and procedures, overseeing the movement of archives between sites, enhancing the online portal, maintaining accurate inventories, and monitoring environmental conditions.

- Assist with the care of collections held at the Covent Garden and Purfleet sites, including repacking collections and participating in preservation projects.
- Act as point of contact for external environmental system contractor and oversee the annual recalibration of sensors.
- Contribute to the development and maintenance of Disaster Recovery plans.
- Assist in the monitoring and care of the Grade I listed theatre building and the collections on public display as required.
- Maintain supplies of specialist preservation materials.

*Cataloguing:*

- Catalogue and digitise a full range of archives and objects as identified by the Head of Collections, to recognised standards and using Axiell Collections CMS. With particular focus on improving catalogues and finding aids for collections housed with DeepStore.
- Contribute to the project to upgrade the Adlib CMS to Axiell Collections CMS, including data testing and the development of cataloguing rules and procedures.

*Public Engagement:*

- Participate in the full range of public engagement activities to promote awareness of and access to the Collections and the history of the Royal Ballet and Opera.
- Liaise with the RBO Social Media team, overseeing the research and creation of historic content from the Collections for social media and other platforms.
- Participate in Collections and Learning & Participation live public events for audiences of all ages.
- Assist the RBO Exhibition Curator and external curators with the research and selection of material for exhibition, preparing loan agreements, advising on copyright, and liaising with conservators and courier companies.
- Contribute to the Costume Preservation training days delivered to South Essex College students at the Costume Centre, Purfleet.

*Information / Reader Services:*

- Deliver information and reader services for internal and external users.
- Research and respond to enquiries to support RBO business needs, academic research and from the public.
- Assist and supervise researchers at the Covent Garden and the Costume Centre, Purfleet, and arrange for archives to be recalled from DeepStore for consultation.
- Manage digitization requests, including copyright and licensing.

*Relationships:*

- Develop and manage projects for volunteers, casual staff and work experience placements, offering support and engagement as required.
- Develop effective working relationships with RBO departments, contractors and stakeholders.

*External Advocacy:*

- Represent the RBO and the interests of Collections both within the organisation and externally. Deputizing for the Head of Collections where necessary.
- Maintain knowledge of professional developments and initiatives. Attend conferences, training course and special interest groups.

*Note: This Job Description reflects the current situation. It does not preclude change or development that might be required in the future.*

## PERSON SPECIFICATION:

### Minimum Skills, Knowledge and Experience:

- A postgraduate qualification in Archives and Records Management.
- Considerable experience of working with archives, ideally special collections.
- Experience of appraising and acquiring new material to enhance collections.
- Experience of managing large collections and stores, including identifying preservation and conservation needs.
- Experience of cataloguing archives and objects to recognised standards using cataloguing databases, ideally Adlib or Axiell Collections.
- Experience of delivering a public engagement activities and social media content to promote archives and engagement.
- Experience of providing reader services and assisting researchers.

### Other Essential Skills, Knowledge and Experience:

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Ability to deal effectively with a wide range of people including members of the public of all ages, volunteers, potential donors and conservators.
- Ability to work independently as well as in close collaboration as part of a team.
- Ability to promote effective teamwork and harmonious working relationships at all levels.
- Knowledge and understanding of current issues facing the archive and heritage sector, including copyright and GDPR.
- Strong IT skills and experience of digitisation of archives.
- Excellent planning and time management skills, able to demonstrate drive and ability to prioritise and work to tight deadlines.
- Able to complete tasks with a high level of accuracy and attention to detail.
- Judgement and discretion to deal appropriately with confidential and sensitive information.

### Desirable Knowledge/Skills and Experience:

- General knowledge of and interest in the history of opera, ballet and theatre, and the Royal Opera and Ballet.

### Job requirements:

- Ability to work at heights and lift heavy loads.
- Flexibility to work off-site and independently, with occasional evening and weekend work.
- Willingness to work sustainably and consider new or improved ways of working to reduce our impact on the environment.

