

TAMARA J. MASON

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CURATORIAL PROFILE

Independent curator, art historian, and collections advisor specializing in contemporary Black art, collecting histories, and community-engaged exhibitions. Through original research, exhibition making, and interpretive writing, her practice explores ritual, spirituality, memory, material culture, and the histories of Black collecting. She collaborates with artists, collectors, and cultural institutions to produce exhibitions that bridge scholarly inquiry with public engagement.

EDUCATION

Temple University, Philadelphia, PA

M.A. Art History (coursework completed)

Focus: Early modern art, collecting practices, transnational art markets

Temple University, Philadelphia, PA

B.A. Art History

CURATED EXHIBITIONS

2026

Start to Art

The Colored Girls Museum, for MAAAC, Philadelphia, PA

Co-Curator

Possession: Body, Memory, Home

Scribe Video and Arts Center, Philadelphia, PA

Curator

2024

Roots and Reflections

Scribe Video and Arts Center, Philadelphia, PA

Co-Curator

2023

Narrative Tactility

Rush Arts Gallery, Philadelphia, PA

Curator

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Museum of African American Art Collections (MAAAC), Philadelphia, PA

Inaugural Vashti DuBois Curatorial Fellow | 2026–Present

- Appointed as the inaugural Vashti DuBois Curatorial Fellow to lead the development of the museum's annual exhibition program.
- Conceive and curate four exhibitions annually through original research, artist and collector engagement, and interpretive scholarship.
- Oversee exhibition planning, installation, project coordination, and institutional partnerships from concept through public presentation.
- Author exhibition essays, catalogs, wall texts, and educational materials that advance the museum's mission.
- Contribute to MAAAC's long-term curatorial vision while maintaining independent scholarly and curatorial judgment.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Founder & Principal, Arte Haus Advisory, Philadelphia, PA

Independent Curatorial & Advisory Practice | 2026–Present

- Advise private collectors on acquisitions, collection development, and stewardship, with a specialization in contemporary Black artists and emerging cultural producers.
- Support artists through exhibition development, collection placement strategies, and curatorial research.
- Develop independent curatorial projects exploring ritual, memory, spirituality, and Black cultural production.
- Build relationships between artists, collectors, and cultural institutions through exhibitions, studio visits, and public-facing programming.

CURATORIAL & ARTS EXPERIENCE

Rush Arts Gallery, Philadelphia, PA

Curatorial Assistant & Gallery/Program Manager | 2021–2026

- Organized and executed more than 10 exhibitions from concept development through installation.
- Assisted in exhibition planning, layout development, artwork handling, and installation logistics.
- Conducted curatorial and object-based research to support exhibition narratives and interpretive materials.
- Authored wall labels, exhibition texts, and supporting didactic materials.
- Coordinated with artists, collectors, lenders, fabricators, and community partners.
- Oversaw scheduling, shipping logistics, artwork documentation, and condition reporting.
- Supported public-facing programming, artist engagement, and institutional partnerships.
- Selected exhibitions supported include *My Country Tis of Thee: The Art of Richard Watson* (2022) and *Rush Forward: Rush Arts 30th Anniversary* (2025).

Studio Institute, New York, NY

Program Coordinator for College Internships | 2019–2025

- Coordinated multi-city arts internship programming across Philadelphia, Baltimore, Boston, and Chicago.

- Developed partnerships with arts and cultural institutions to support emerging arts professionals.
- Organized professional development programming, lectures, and institutional site visits.
- Managed cohort logistics, recruitment, and institutional communications.

Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia, PA

Art Team Associate | 2017–2021

- Conducted research on collection objects and developed object-based educational presentations.
- Delivered gallery talks and virtual lectures for public and member audiences.
- Authored collection-based interpretive materials for online public access.
- Developed specialized lectures connecting art historical scholarship to broader cultural audiences.

Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA

Public Programs Adjunct (Intern) | 2010–2011

- Researched and cataloged museum collection materials.
- Assisted with lecture programming and public educational initiatives.
- Developed thematic content for museum public programs.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Contemporary Black art; ritual and spirituality in contemporary art; Black sacred traditions; memory and material culture; collecting practices; patronage and display; contemporary curatorial practice; community-centered exhibitions.

PRESENTATIONS & CONFERENCES

2021

Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia, PA

“Barnes Takeout: Art Talk on Jan van Goyen’s *The Square Watch Tower*”

National Arts Educators Association, Minneapolis, MN

“Perspectives from People of Color on the Changing Landscape of Museums in Transforming Cities”

2019

Tools for the Future: Workshop 3 – The Formation and Development of New Art Markets, London, UK

“El Greco and the Barnes Foundation: A Proto-Modernist in a Burgeoning American Art Market”

Scholars of Color Conference, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA

“The Othering of the Black Female Form”

2018

Tools for the Future: Workshop 2 – Researching Art Market Practices from Past to Present, Utrecht, Netherlands

“The Allure of Spirituality: El Greco and His Spanish Patronage”

2017

Colloquia Arts et Médias, Université du Montréal, Montréal, Canada

“Between the Lines, Beyond the Image: Subversive Subjectivity of the Black Female Form in Thomas Stothard’s *Sable Venus*”

Florida State University Art History Graduate Symposium, Tallahassee, FL
“Beyond the Image: Issues of National Identity Within Thomas Stothard’s *Sable Venus*”

RESEARCH TRAINING & LANGUAGES

The Frick Collection / Columbia University, New York, NY

Coursework in 17th-century Dutch paleography

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Philadelphia, PA

Coursework in Spanish epigraphy, illuminated manuscripts, incunabula, and archival studies

Languages: Spanish (proficient); Dutch (reading knowledge); German (reading knowledge)

SKILLS

Exhibition development; curatorial research; collections research; archival research; interpretive writing; artwork handling; installation coordination; public programming; artist relations; TMS; Microsoft Office Suite