



**Burning Man
Director of Art and Civic Engagement
Position Description**

Painter Executive Search is supporting Burning Man in their search for a Director of Art and Civic Engagement to lead the staff in creating programs that elevate and support artists and participants as they bring Burning Man culture to the world.

Burning Man Project (Burning Man) is a 501(c)3 public benefit corporation whose mission is to facilitate and extend the culture that has issued from the Burning Man event (AKA Black Rock City) into the larger world. Burning Man seeks to continue to nurture Black Rock City as the seminal manifestation of the 10 Principles-based culture, while developing an infrastructure to connect, celebrate and facilitate the sharing of the culture in communities around the world. Based in San Francisco, California, Burning Man employs a diverse staff of creative professionals with extensive knowledge of art, technology, civics, and community building who seek to bring experiences to people in grand, awe-inspiring and joyful ways that lift the human spirit, address social problems and inspire a sense of culture, community and personal engagement.

Creative expression has been central to the experience of Burning Man from its inception. In the beginning, art was built simply as a vehicle for self-expression—art for art sake, free of the limitations of the size, style or the valuation of art markets. Overtime, a movement or school has evolved. Burning Man Art can't be viewed independently from the process of its creation. It is art that is both public and participatory, often evoking ritual which solicits collaboration from its audience and in its creation. While Burning Man views every person as an artist and invites everyone to engage in creative expression, the art presented on the playa of Black Rock City (and increasingly, off-playa) is sophisticated, evocative and beautiful. Burning Man Art is not simply valued for its commercial market value, but for its social value--the engagement of the community and the opportunity for personal transformation. Civic engagement and community development flow from the experience of Burning Man through both the participatory art and model of civic life that has evolved on the playa. The experience and understanding that germinates at Black Rock City annually, seeds a wide range of events, public art and social action around the world creating a movement in art and action.

POSITION SUMMARY

Reporting to the CEO and working with an established team of dedicated professionals, The Director of Art and Civic Engagement (Director) will lead the team in developing a seamless support organization that collaborates with artists and participants in the creation of life-affirming, interactive experiences of art and civic participation. Building upon the programs that exist from the previous work of the Black Rock Arts Foundation (BRAAF), Burners without Borders (BWB) and through other services such as the Black Rock City's art department, the Director will be responsible for growing a streamlined and responsive support program. This group collectively creates and builds increased opportunities for funding, technical support, collaboration and learning so that the collective knowledge required to bring Burning Man Art and civic action into the world, is accessible to all and has the opportunity to be supported with seed funding. By strategically developing relationships, hosting convenings and by connecting resources, this department is a conduit of information, resources and support for those building Burning Man culture on and off the playa of Black Rock City.

Current programs of the newly consolidated Department of Art and Civic Engagement includes a range of grants for the creation and presentation of Burning Man Art and for civic engagement projects. Additionally, the department develops new initiatives including opportunities to collaborate on new public art, establishes partnerships and collaborations with other organizations, agencies or governments around placing public art and for utilizing artistic process as a vehicle for civic engagement.

An important component of this role is the interaction and support of artists who produce art for Black Rock City. The Burning Man Art team interacts with artists year round through the process of receiving and reviewing of Letters of Intent, proposal review, grantmaking and with technical, logistical and heavy equipment support during installation and removal of the art on the playa. Developing these critical support services so that they are valuable, timely and create opportunities for learning will be a key component of this leadership role.

In addition to managing the Honoraria program for artists producing work for Black Rock City, this role is responsible for developing grant programs focused on Global Arts, Civic Art and Civic Engagement. These programs must encourage participation and become valuable to the recipients as a base upon which they can build additional funding and support for their work. Part of this effort is amplifying and highlighting Burning Man Art and assisting in the development of this art movement. In addition to advancing the art, methods and forums for sharing and celebrating civic engagement projects will be important. Overall, the formalization of a knowledge-sharing program which provides access to the accumulated knowledge, expertise, resources and learnings resident in the community is critical to mission of fostering this work in the world.

The Art and Civic Engagement Department is comprised of 8 fulltime staff including three associate directors: the Associate Director of Strategic Initiatives, Art Management and Burners without Borders. The operating budget for this department is \$2.1 million with \$1.3 million budgeted for grantmaking programs in arts, honoraria and civic engagement.

History

Burning Man began in June, 1986, as a one night event on Baker Beach in San Francisco. The burning of a wooden sculpture, in the form of a human figure, was a spontaneous act of creativity that became an annual tradition. In 1990, the event grew to span Labor Day weekend and moved to Nevada's Black Rock Desert. Today, Burning Man is a year round, globally recognized organization that manages the infrastructure of Black Rock City, where 70,000 attendees (or "Burners") gather for the annual eight day event.

In 1998, the six founders of the event now known as Black Rock City formed an LLC for the purposes of managing the event's operations. In 2011, they recruited a Board of Directors and formed the nonprofit organization, Burning Man Project, in a formalized effort to extend the principles, creativity, and culture of Burning Man into the world, year round. The nonprofit received its 501(c)3 status in May 2012. In order to more fully realize the vision of the new nonprofit, the Board of Directors and Burning Man's leadership developed a strategy of aggregating the programs and organizations into a single entity. This strategy ultimately brought together Black Rock City LLC, Black Rock Arts Foundation (BRAAF) and Burners Without Borders (BWB) under the umbrella of the Burning Man Project nonprofit. Today the Burning Man Project, simply known as Burning Man, is positioned to support these key programs through its focus on three core areas of work; The Event, The Culture and The Network.

Today, Burning Man's community of artists, event participants, and volunteers spans the globe and includes over 60 community produced regional celebrations and gatherings as well as civic engagement work in more than 24 countries.

Black Rock City and Burning Man on the Playa

The eight-day annual event in Nevada's Black Rock Desert is the "mother ship" of Burning Man culture. The individual experience of Burning Man can simply be described as completely dependent upon what you bring to it. The exercise of radical self-reliance in this unforgiving desert environment meets the open, gifting culture that eliminates money and adopts a currency of participation, radical self-expression and ultimately the immediacy of self-discovery. This is not a festival to "see" but a vibrant, active community of citizens fully participating in the expression of self and community through art, experiences and communal living. Black Rock City is designed as a vessel for community engagement that honors self-expression through all means, but is particularly well known for its art. The art that is created and shared at Burning Man has long been celebrated in books and video, but a true understanding of the power of the iconic sculptures, art cars, and rituals requires participation and personal experience.

Over 350 artworks including large scale sculptures, art cars and temples are brought to Black Rock City each year. These works defy generic descriptions, but are meant to be touched, played with and moved; deliberately blurring the lines between audience and art. Fire and lighting elements are integral to this art, creating additional opportunities for engagement and interactivity with the works during the weeklong event. Burning Man Art created for the playa presents substantial design challenges due to the harsh desert environment including extreme heat, high winds, lightening and alkaline dust. Often six months in design, engineering and preplanning, the works must be assembled and disassembled in short windows of time before and after the Burning Man event at the end of August.

BURNING MAN ART and ART PROGRAMS

Threaded through out the experience of Burning Man, either on or off playa is art that requires individual and community participation for its completion. The mission of Burning Man Arts is to change the paradigm of art from a commodified object to an interactive, participatory, shared experience of creative expression.

In the Fall of 2014, all art initiatives, on and off the playa have been joined to create a single, robust program that strives to provide more streamlined services to artists, produce more interactive, community driven art and inspire more civic engagement projects.

Burning Man Arts programs often fund new art and new artists—work that is often risky and unproven but has the potential for fresh engagement with communities. These grants are seed capital, not enough to fully fund any project, but enough to use as leverage and to encourage others to participate in the development of the idea and the art.

Black Rock City Honoraria

The Black Rock City Honoraria helps artists create art for the annual Burning Man event in Black Rock City. This art, in the tradition of Burning Man, stands on its own as a physical, sculptural installation and is independent of performance or activities, although these often accompany the installation. Art created for Black Rock City is uniquely challenging due to the harsh environment and the limitations around installation. This year over 500 Letters of Intent to bring artwork to Black Rock City were received, resulting in over 200 full applications for support and the awarding of nearly 80 support Honoraria. Fully funding these requests would have required well over \$15 million dollars, but the annual support (\$1.2 million budgeted for 2015) provides key funding that supports the projects in early stages.

Civic Arts Program

The Civic Arts program works with new and existing artworks, many from Burning Man events, and exposes them to a new audience by adapting and installing them in public places. By providing new

contexts for the art, the impact and relevance of the artwork evolves in new, unexpected and compelling ways unique to that community.

The Civic Arts Program was born in 2005 when artist David Best was commissioned to collaborate with the San Francisco Hayes Valley community to create an interactive “Temple”. The Temple became a model of how artists, city officials and community members can collaborate to create meaningful public art that addresses and reflects the community itself. This year David Best is creating another temple in Hayes Valley; the 10th Anniversary Temple at Patricia’s Green is a collaboration with the SF Arts Commission and the City, with support from San Francisco Grants for the Arts. It is anticipated that the work will draw more than 1700 people per day to the park.

Burning Man’s Civic Arts program has supported more than 45 projects to date including more than \$200k in seed funding awarded to eight projects in 2014.

Global Art Grants

The Global Art Grant program funds highly interactive, community-driven works of art that prioritize community involvement in their development, execution and display. This art is accessible to the public, civic in scope and prompts the viewer to act. Often the art can be experienced in more than visual ways- it can be touched, heard or is otherwise interactive. While the art at Burning Man was the original inspiration for the program, grants are not restricted to the Burning Man network or community. The grants seed projects that have the potential to transform a community through interaction and participation with art.

Burning Man has funded more than 100 Global Arts projects in 18 countries including over 23 projects in the United States since 2003. This year nearly 400 Letters of Intent were received and are being reviewed with the expectation that nearly \$100,000 in seed capital will be granted in 2015.

BURNERS WITHOUT BORDERS AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Although Burning Man Art has significant civic engagement value and is often pivotal in creating change in a community, it is not the only element that Burners employ in bringing Burning Man’s 10 Principle-based values to their communities. The creative, collaborative, solution-oriented approach required to adapt to the harsh environment of the Black Rock Desert, also fosters action, innovation and community responses to local needs.

Burners Without Borders (BWB) promotes activities around the globe that support a community’s inherent capacity to thrive by encouraging innovative approaches to disaster relief and grassroots initiatives that make a positive impact. BWB was born in Biloxi, Mississippi during the 2005 Hurricane Katrina disaster relief effort where Burning Man participants had instinctively gathered to fill in where government relief efforts were falling short. Since then, BWB has emerged as a grassroots, volunteer-driven, community leadership organization whose goal is to unlock the creativity of local communities to solve problems that bring about meaningful change. Supporting volunteers from around the world in innovative disaster relief solutions and community resiliency projects, BWB is known for the unbridled creativity they bring to every civic project they do. BWB recently became a program of Burning Man after operating as a fiscally sponsored organization.

BWB has been active in 24 countries, financially contributing to the grassroots efforts of 114 projects including 9 Disaster Relief Projects during its 10 year history. Currently BWB is accepting applications for their 7th annual community grant program. This program awards from \$100 to \$1000 for work that will jumpstart creative civic projects that grow community and make a positive impact. BWB prides itself on accomplishing a lot with a little. Examples of grants include \$700 to support Shoot Cameras Not Guns in Myanmar, a project that teaches photography as a tool for social change and empowerment and \$400

for the Angier Ave Neighborhood Farm to use to fabricate a bike-powered veggie cart to gift overstock vegetables to community members who are in need and are not mobile.

Fostering resourcefulness, BWB provides encouragement and shares examples of important grassroots work that focuses on action rather than on funding as a starting point. BWB often highlights projects that are grassroots driven and can draw support from the Burning Man community. An example is the MotoMoto Circus in Mombasa, Kenya, that engages, supports and empowers marginalized street living youth through the medium of Fire Dancing. These projects range from relatively straight-forward costumed-shopping-cart-race-food-drives to experiments in alternate currencies. BWB supports and highlights radically good ideas, carried out by volunteers in their home communities through the support and resourcefulness of those who understand the transformational value of local action.

DIRECTOR OF ART AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT DUTIES & ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS LEADERSHIP, STRATEGY AND COMMUNICATIONS

- Support and partner with the CEO and other key leadership to develop a strategy for fostering the grassroots efforts to bring Burning Man Art and culture around the globe;
- Develop clear objectives and lead the streamlining of programs so that they have maximum value to artists and participants;
- Continue to develop an internal culture of appreciation and excellence, keeping an eye to the needs of the greater Burning Man community;
- Be Bold. Develop and support new and sometimes risky ideas that can facilitate the expression of Burning Man 's 10 Principle-based culture in the world;
- Engage with volunteers in a manner that affirms their importance and value to Burning Man culture and both facilitates and celebrates their personal contributions of creativity, participation and time;
- Build and maintain strong relationships within the artists community and be seen as an art and artist advocate;
- Actively understand, reflect, and promote Burning Man to the public, effectively and joyfully sharing the uniqueness of the art and culture and promoting its importance;
- Develop and recommend long-range plans, objectives and resource needs for the program, and recommend strategies for implementing these plans;
- With the CEO and leadership team, help steward the strategic vision of the Burning Man organization, participating in weekly leadership team meetings, communicating departmental priorities and goals, and building a positive team culture that reflects the organizations values;
- In consultation with others, craft organizational messaging about Burning Man's programs; communicate clearly internally and externally the purpose and capacity of current programs including participating in the development of funding for them;
- Working across the organization, to help establish an awareness and a vocabulary for communicating outcomes of Burning Man's highly diverse and creative work;
- In coordination with Burning Man Communications, develop content for publications such as Jack Rabbit Speaks, newsletters, annual reports, fundraising appeals, e-mail, and other communication channels;
- Engage in positive leadership development within the team to advance Burning Man as a great organization;
- Represent Burning Man, Burning Man Art, artists and programmatic work to the media;
- Support and participate in the representation of the Burning Man organization at speaking engagements and to government, legal, press, affiliates, commercial and other applicable outside agencies and entities;

- Collaborate and assist in all fundraising activities in support of Burning Man Art and Civic Engagement programs, artists and volunteers.

MANAGEMENT AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

- Manage the day-to-day responsibilities of Art and Civic Engagement department;
- Recruit, nurture and challenge a highly-qualified and motivated professional staff; delegate specific responsibilities with appropriate authority and establish accountability; foster open communications;
- Conduct surveys and research best practices to assist in policy development; review and analyze community arts and cultural needs, desires of the community, availability of resources, and related factors;
- Lead ongoing development and improvement of departmental policies and practices including grantmaking practices, institute effective meeting structures and methods for inter-departmental collaboration to ensure that departmental strategies are integrated and policies and procedures reflect the organization's values;
- Develop new tools and structures for gathering and communicating the collective knowledge of Burning Man artists and volunteers and facilitate increased communication and collaboration;
- Support the department as it integrates the recent changes in structure; facilitate adaptation and focus on departmental excellence and quality service;
- Build a scalable model of Art and Civic Engagement programming that can be adapted and built internationally;
- Collaborate with the Finance Director to develop and implement the department's annual budget; track and manage budget to actuals and authorize spending accordingly;
- Guide decisions made for opportunistic spending including but not limited to existing art or civic engagement program areas;
- Set up methods for evaluating and assessing the impact of Burning Man's work;
- Assist in the creation, publishing and maintenance of process documentation.

GRANT MAKING

- Clarify and communicate grantmaking programs to assist grantees in successful submissions;
- Oversee all grant processes for Art and Civic Engagement including regular assessment and feedback regarding the grants process, size of grants and value of grant for the time required;
- Oversee Art and Civic Engagement contracts, processes and requests in collaboration with the Program Services Manager in order to ensure the process addresses the needs of participants;
- Recommend any changes needed to improve the quality and effectiveness of grant programs;
- Oversee grant administration and operations and ensure compliance with all policies, as well as legal and contractual obligations.

EXPERIENCE

A successful candidate will likely have:

- Significant experience leading Art and/or Civic Engagement Programs;
- Well-developed staff and financial management skills including knowledge of financials, developing and tracking budgets, and personnel management;
- Evidence of developing and implementing strategy- a strategic thinker, planner and executor with an operating style that encourages collaboration;
- Experience, ability and passion as an arts and artists advocate;
- Familiarity with grantmaking and knowledge of best practices;
- Experience building and/or significantly growing a sophisticated service operation, ideally within in a visual arts-related organization or cultural institution;

- Excellent relationship-building skills and agility to build rapport with internal and external stakeholders around innovative ideas and programs;
- Able to work effectively with a diverse range of people including artists, board members, and colleagues across the Burning Man;
- Experience fostering deep relationships with volunteers and valuing their contributions of time expertise and passion as equal to any financial contribution;
- Exceptional communication skills; articulate, with proven ability to write effectively and speak persuasively;
- Superior organizational skills, with a strong sense of detail-orientation and excellent time management skills;
- Demonstrated success in working with a wide range of people, including dedicated volunteers, thought leaders, nonprofit, philanthropic, corporate, community, and government partners;
- Experience implementing an internal culture focused on impact, organizational reflection and learning;
- A bachelor's degree, preferably a Graduate Degree;
- Ability to obtain a Drivers' License and demonstrate a clean driving record;
- Direct familiarity with Burning Man as a result of participating in the annual Black Rock City and/or official Burning Man regional events in other locations;
- Ability to adjust work schedule seasonally and work away from home (on playa) for up to 10 days during the months of August and September;
- Capacity to travel domestic and internationally.

ATTRIBUTES

- Dedicated to principles of behavior and ethics of the Burning Man organization; able to embrace the organization's evolving mission and the sweep of its vision, and will fit well within a culture of impassioned, driven, creative, and dedicated professionals;
- Dynamic, highly organized, and strategic individual with a deep understanding of their personal value and a commitment to express that value creatively and with passion;
- Inspirational, able to bring out the best in others and joyfully approach challenges as opportunities for growth and learning;
- Comfortable with change and in leading change;
- Ability to think on his or her feet, problem solve, critically think, and remain calm under stress;
- Excellent judgment in high-level decision-making. This includes understanding the "grey areas" and the ability to know when to act and when to seek advice and buy-in;
- Friendly, personable demeanor conducive to effectively presenting information and responding to questions from executives, managers, staff, vendors, artists, local community members, participants, BMP board members, and the general public;
- Ability to prioritize tasks in a fast-paced environment along with the ability to accept interruptions as part of the routine; confidence in managing multiple projects and deadlines;
- Exercise a keen sense of organizational diplomacy, able to maintain personal integrity and demonstrate leadership within the unique Burning Man culture;
- Possesses a high degree of emotional intelligence, self-awareness and fortitude.

For additional information or to be considered for this role contact:

Nancy Painter

Nancy@painterexecutivesearch.com

(415) 202- 6240