

COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT POLICY

ARTS & SCIENCE CENTER MISSION STATEMENT:

The Arts & Science Center for Southeast Arkansas, commissioned by the City of Pine Bluff in 1968, is operated for the cultural benefit of all citizens of southeast Arkansas.

Our mission is to provide for the practice, teaching, performance, enjoyment and understanding of the arts and sciences.

The Arts & Science Center collects, exhibits, and interprets works of art, holds them in public trust and is dedicated to their preservation for present and future generations.

Underlying these efforts is the belief that the arts and sciences preserve and transmit our heritage, enrich our lives and contribute significantly to the social, educational and economic well being of southeast Arkansas.

I. GENERAL – the following policies have been developed in order to

- A. explain the purpose of the Arts & Science Center as a collecting institution
- B. prescribe the Center's methods of acquiring works of art for the collections
- C. prescribe the Center's methods of disposing of works of art from the collections
- D. establish conditions under which works of art may be lent from the Center's collections and borrowed from other museums, institutions, and private sources
- E. establish and insure proper record keeping requirements for works of art placed in the Center's care
- F. establish and insure proper procedures for periodic inventories of the collections for accounting and conservation purposes, and
- G. establish and insure proper insurance procedures regarding collection items, incoming loans and items placed in the Center's custody.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Permanent Collection is a term used to designate all works of art owned by the Center and carried on the accession records of the Center.
- B. A collection object is an item that has been or will be accessioned into the collections.

- C. Accessioning is the formal process used to accept and record an object as a collection item.
- D. Deaccessioning is the formal process to remove permanently an object from the collections or when an object has been lost or destroyed the formal process used to document the loss in the collection records.
- E. Disposal is an act by which the Center physically divests itself of a collection item.
- F. Loans are temporary transfers of collection items from the Center, or temporary transfers of similar items to the Center for stated Center purposes. The transfers do not involve a change of ownership.
- G. Items placed in the custody of the Center are objects that are not owned by the Center but that are left temporarily in the Center for other than loan purposes. (For example, for attribution, identification, examination of object for possible gift or purchase.)
- H. The Acquisition Fund is restricted for acquisitions and the direct care of the Permanent Collection.

III. COLLECTION FOCUS

The present focus of the Center's Permanent Collection is "to collect, exhibit, interpret, and preserve works of art unique to the southern region of the United States with an emphasis on Arkansas artists, African-American artists, and Art of the Delta culture." This stated collection focus addresses the Center's regional constituency and places emphasis upon collecting works by African-American artists, Arkansas artists, and artists living and working in the southern region of the United States. The present focus does not exclude expansion into new fields as resources and opportunities allow.

IV. ACQUISITION OF ART OBJECTS

A. General

1. Works of art may be acquired by means of gift, bequest, purchase, exchange or any other transactions in which title to the object passes to the Arts & Science Center.
2. A major responsibility of the Board of Trustees is to protect and develop the assets of The Arts & Science Center in order to achieve its mission. It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to annually review and establish goals of the Center. From this it follows that

the Board of Trustees is responsible for providing adequate, dependable funding in a manner that enables the Collections Committee of the Center to accomplish its goals. The Collections Committee shall consist of:

- a. Executive Director
- b. Curator of Collections and Exhibitions
- c. Chairperson of the Collections Committee
- d. Chairperson of the Visual Arts and Sciences Exhibitions Committee
- e. One other trustee appointed by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees

B. Special Considerations

1. In their deliberations, the Collections Committee and the Curator of Collections and Exhibitions are guided by the following criteria, among others, in determining the appropriateness of objects to be added to the Permanent Collection:

- a. The object must conform to and be consistent with established collection goals of the Center.
- b. Since purchase funds are always limited, priority should be given to purchasing objects of unusual quality, rarity or interest.
- c. No object should be acquired if the Center is unable to give it proper care.
- d. No object should be acquired unless it can be utilized effectively by the Center.
- e. No object should be acquired if its record of provenance is unsatisfactory or if there is any question concerning legal transfer of title.
- f. Only in the most unusual circumstances should an object be added to the Permanent Collection when it is encumbered with conditions imposed by the donor or vendor regarding use or future disposition. Such exceptions must be approved by the Board of Trustees.
- g. The Collections Committee must be made aware of and consider the consequences of adding works to the collection which may be restricted or encumbered by property rights.

- h. The Collections Committee should carefully estimate future costs of conservation, display and maintenance for collection items acquired by the Center.
- i. Works of art offered to the Center by gift or bequest with the provision that they may be sold for the Center's benefit, should first be considered by the Collections Committee for entry into the Permanent Collection and, if rejected, disposed of at the Committee's discretion. The use of funds realized in this manner will be determined by the Board of Trustees.
- j. The Collection Committee should exercise particular care in acquiring for the Center entire collections containing significant numbers of objects not suitable for the Permanent Collection. If a collection of this kind is acquired, clear agreement must be reached prior to acquisition that will allow for free disposition of unsuitable objects in the future.

C. Procedures

1. Authority to accept donations of art and to purchase art for the Center rests with the Board of Trustees. Authority to purchase or accept donations for specific works of art may be delegated to the Collections Committee by the Board of Trustees at its discretion, provided such action falls within the goals of the Center as established in its collections management policy, and provided adequate funding in the case of a purchase has been approved by the Board of Trustees.

2. Funds available to the Center for the purchase of art are subject to the control of the Board of Trustees, but may be appropriated to the Collections Committee by the Board of Trustees at its discretion.

3. Works of art offered as gifts or proposed for purchase, from whatever source, are presented to the Collections Committee by the Curator of Collections and Exhibitions, hereafter referred to as the Curator, with his/her recommendation. The Collections Committee should not recommend that an item be entered into the Permanent Collection without the concurrent recommendation of the Curator.

4. If the Collections Committee, in the course of exercising authority properly delegated to it by the Board of Trustees, is unable to reach a decision regarding acceptance of a

donation or expenditure of purchase funds, or if the Collections Committee chooses not to exercise its authority in such matters, it may request that such decisions be made by the Board of Trustees. In such cases the Collections Committee will furnish the Board of Trustees with all relevant facts, including its reasons for requesting action by the Board of Trustee

5. The Curator will insure that a valid “Deed of Gift,” “Seller’s Warranty” and/ or “VARA Waiver” is created to document transfer of ownership for works of art donated to the Center. This document must record the value or purchase price, convey title and ownership to the Center, and in the case of gifts, be signed to agreement by the donor(s) and a duly authorized officer of the Center. Deeds of Gift will be filed on the permanent records of Center as assets.

6. The Committee will make its written recommendations for accessions to the Board of Trustees. Acceptance of the Collections Committee recommendation will constitute authority for the Curator to effect accessions.

V. APPRAISALS

1. General:

a. Frequently donors request assistance from the Center in obtaining fair market appraisals for art objects they offer as gifts. The Center staff may supply donors with a list of qualified appraisers. Since the financial benefit of the appraisal and the donation accrue to the donor, the appraisal fee and all associated costs thereof are the sole responsibility of the donor.

b. Under no circumstances may employees of the Center engage in appraising works of art, either for donations to the Center or otherwise.

VI. DEACCESSIONING

A. General:

Unless there are specific restrictions to the contrary, collection items may be deaccessioned through public auction, donation to another institution with a similar mission, or exchange with an institution with a similar mission. In the event that an object cannot be sold, donated, or exchanged, the deaccessioned object **must be destroyed**. Authority to recommend deaccession, i.e., to declare collection items be withdrawn from the Permanent Collections of the Center, rests with the Collections Committee acting in concert with the Curator. Authority to

actually dispose of collection items, however, rests solely with the Board of Trustees, as it does with all tangible assets of the Center. This authority may be delegated to the Collections Committee by the Board of Trustees.

B. Special Considerations:

1. In the process of deaccessioning and disposing of collection items, the Center must be acutely aware of its role as trustee of the collections for the benefit of the public. It is vital that complete records be maintained, both of deliberations resulting in disposal of collection items (board and committee minutes) and actions to actually accomplish disposal (correspondence, agreements, contracts, title transfers, bill of sale, receipts, etc.). Such information shall be entered into the primary records of the Center by the Curator or Registrar and maintained as a part of the permanent record of each item affected.

2. Disposal actions will always be treated forthrightly and openly, especially in respect to the Center's membership and others upon which the Center depends for its support and goodwill.

C. Procedures:

1. Recommendations to deaccession collection items will normally be made by the Curator to the Collections Committee. The Collections Committee should not recommend to deaccession collection items without the recommendation of the Curator. In its deliberations, the Collections Committee should consider carefully the following criteria:

- a. Is the Collections Committee assured that deliberations are guided by considerations of quality, physical condition or usefulness, and not by personal taste or momentary fashion?
- b. Is the object no longer relevant to the Center's mission?
- c. Is there a question of the Center's ability to preserve or protect the object properly?
- d. Has the object deteriorated beyond usefulness?
- e. Is it doubtful that the object can be used in the foreseeable future?
- f. Is there a redundancy of the object in the collection?
- g. Is there a need to improve or strengthen another area of the collection in order to further the goals of the museum?

h. Have the interests and reactions of the public been considered?

2. As an aid to its deliberations, the Curator shall secure and provide the Collections Committee with opinions and advice of disinterested authorities, as appropriate, but especially when issues of quality and authenticity are major factors affecting the decision-making process.

3. Also, as a general rule, when considering items for deaccessioning the Collection Committee must be sensitive to the feelings of donors and the immediate family of donors, where appropriate. When objects are given to the Center without restriction, the Center as a gesture of goodwill may notify the original donor (or family descendants,) where feasible, of the fact that a deaccession action has been taken.

4. When the Collections Committee has formally approved the deaccessioning of a collection item, the following action will be taken:

- a. A written recommendation for deaccessioning action will be forwarded to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees. It shall state clearly the item(s), original source, estimated market value, reasons for deaccessioning, recommended method of disposal, how disposal will further The Arts & Science Center's collecting goals and any pertinent or sensitive implications of which the Board of Trustees should be made aware.
- b. The Committee will make its written recommendation of method of disposal to the Board of Trustees. Acceptance of the Collections Committee recommendations will constitute Curator authority to effect disposal.

D. Methods of Disposal:

1. The original donor or family descendants may be given the first refusal to repurchase a deaccessioned object at appraised value. If no response has been made by the donor within 30 days of notification of a deaccession decision, the Collections Committee may proceed with other methods of disposal.

2. The Collections Committee may choose and recommend to the Board of Trustees one of the following methods of disposal:

- a. If an item is so badly deteriorated, or in such a condition as to present a hazard to the Center, its collections, Center personnel or the public, its destruction may be authorized.
- b. An item may be donated to another non-profit institution with a mission similar to the Center's.
- c. An item may be sold to or exchanged for other item(s) from another non-profit institution with a similar mission.
- d. An item may be sold at public auction.

3. Under no circumstance shall a collection item be sold or exchanged with a private individual.

4. The Board of Trustees has an obligation to secure the best value possible when disposing of collection assets. At the same time, there is merit in choosing a disposal method that may benefit another collecting institution, and one that protects the Center's reputation.

5. As a general rule, the more public the disposal method chosen, the less likely it is that the Center will be questioned or criticized for having deaccessioned and disposed of collection items.

E. Use of Funds Realized Through Disposal:

1. Funds realized through sale or disposal of collection items will be placed in an acquisition fund for the purchase of art for the Permanent Collection.

2. At the direction of the Collections Committee, the Curator may be authorized to make discretionary purchases from restricted funds realized through disposal of collections items for the direct care of the Permanent Collection, in such amounts and for such purposes as the Collections Committee may determine.

3. The Curator in turn may delegate his/her discretionary authority in this respect to members of the Center's curatorial staff. The amount of any purchase must be approved by the Board of Trustees.

F. Crediting Donors of Deaccessioned Items:

It is the policy of the Arts & Science Center that the names of the original donors, singularly or severally, be transferred to the newly acquired items, whenever items are acquired for the collection using funds obtained through the disposal of deaccessioned items. This is the case even when other funds are added to obtain an item, and even though the resulting credit line may thereby list several various donors and sources of funds.

VII. LOANS

A. General:

1. Incoming Loans are items belonging to others, borrowed by the Center.

Outgoing Loans are items belonging to the Center, borrowed by others.

2. In keeping with the Center's mission, it is the policy of the Center to loan objects to encourage the research and public enjoyment of an object(s) to institutions with similar missions for educational purposes, if they are able and willing to meet the minimum of the following requirements:

- a. Sufficient facilities and resources to ensure the environmental protection of the object(s).
- b. Adequate safety precautions to insure the safe packing, transport and handling of the object(s).
- c. Adequate insurance.

B. Duration of Loans:

1. All loans, whether incoming or outgoing, are lent for a specific period of time. The Center reserves the right to terminate a loan at any time before its expiration with reasonable notice given to the owner. Long Term Loans are those lent or borrowed for a period of at least one (1) year, frequently with the option of renewal at the conclusion of a specified period.

C. Loan Procedure:

1. The Board of Trustees delegates the authority to approve loans to the Curator.
2. Outgoing loans are approved by the Curator for purposes consistent with the best interests of The Arts & Science Center and at the Center's convenience.

3. Incoming loans are approved by the Curator, and are only requested for specific purposes and periods of time. Most often, loans are requested from outside sources for the purposes of special exhibitions or approved research.

4. Periodic reports of the Center's loan activity will be prepared by the Curator to be presented to the Collections Committee and the Board of Trustees.

D. Loan Costs:

1. In granting loan requests, it is understood that the borrower agrees to bear all costs, including preparation, packing, shipping and insurance. If it is agreed that the borrower provide insurance on the loaned item(s), then the borrower must furnish The Arts & Science Center with a certificate of insurance guaranteeing insurance before the item(s) may be released from the Center.

2. Revenue generated through the rental of collection items shall be dedicated to the Acquisition Fund.

3. Loans should be judged on the ability of the Center to promote its mission, serve its regional constituency and the ability of the object(s) to withstand travel; not on the ability of the object(s) to produce revenue.

E. Loan Records:

1. It is the responsibility of the Registrar to maintain and secure a complete set of records of every loan transaction. Such records may consist of correspondence, memos of conversations, loan agreement forms, certificates of insurance, condition reports and any other records that document loan activities.

2. Incoming and Outgoing Receipts are especially important, and must be executed and maintained for every work of art entering or leaving the Center.

3. The Curator and the Registrar, in addition, is responsible for the historical record of every work of art belonging to the Center that is on loan.

4. In order to insure proper security and handling of items loaned to the Center, the Curator and the Registrar are responsible for making periodic inspections to note the physical condition of property belonging to others, a record of such inspections may be maintained in the collection files.

VIII. CARE OF COLLECTIONS

A. General:

1. One of the most valuable assets of the Arts & Science Center is its collections. From this, it follows that both the Board of Trustees and the staff have a constant and continuing responsibility to care for and safeguard the art works housed in the Center.

2. Each member of the staff is directly or indirectly involved with insuring the welfare and preservation of the collections, just as each member of the Board of Trustees bears the responsibility of trusteeship. Care of the collections is accomplished in several ways.

B. Physical Protection:

1. It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to insure the collections are adequately protected against fire, theft, vandalism, natural disasters and environmental degradation. Whether collections are on exhibition or in storage, precautions must be taken and procedures established to insure their safety. The following methods are normally used:

- a. The provision of adequate buildings, exhibition facilities and storage facilities; and environmental systems (heating, air conditioning, humidity controls) that will insure the safe physical accommodation of the collections.
- b. A security system and procedures to guard against fire, theft, vandalism, abuse and infestation.
- c. Procedures that provide for the prudent care and protection of objects for foreseeable disasters.
- d. Staff with direct responsibilities for collection items are governed by professional procedures and standards to insure alertness and care in handling, exhibiting and caring otherwise for the collections.
- e. Professional guidelines and standards will govern couriers in the transport of object(s).

2. The Board and staff will continue to work together to develop resources and procedures that will guarantee the preservation of collections for the future.

C. Conservation:

Conservation of collections through regular periodic inspection and treatment is a continuing responsibility of the Board of Trustees. This is accomplished through provision of an adequate budget to conduct an ongoing program of preservation, repair, and restoration as needed. This program, guided by the Curator, is under the direct supervision of the Board of Trustees. It is a responsibility of the Collections Committee to establish a conservation program to recommend to the Board of Trustees.

D. Handling Collections:

It is the responsibility of the Curator to supervise packing and shipping of works of art, both those belonging to the Center and those borrowed from outside sources.

E. Location Records:

It is a responsibility of the Curator and the Registrar to develop and maintain a system for recording the location of all collection items at all times, whether on exhibition or in storage.

IX. COLLECTIONS RECORDS

A. General:

An established system of collection records will be maintained pertaining to the collections. These fall within two major categories: Primary Records and Curatorial Records.

B. Primary Records:

These are a responsibility of the Curator and the Registrar. They consist of, but are not limited to the following: documents recording legal status of the item (bill of sale, deed, gift, etc.), correspondence pertinent to the acquisition of an item, records of the Collections Committee (and Board, if applicable), action authorizing acquisition of the item, descriptive date, valuation, insurance records, location records, conservation history, publication history, photographic documentation, and any other records of an item's use and movement within the Center and while on loan.

C. Curatorial Records:

These may duplicate some of the primary records (e.g. descriptive date, exhibition, and publication date, etc.) but consist primarily of historical and research data developed by the Curator establishing the item's proper place and importance within its cultural or artistic sphere.

D. Location of Records:

Collection records may be maintained in one location. Also, apart from primary records (bill of sale, deeds of gift, etc.), the Center may choose to store a portion of its collection records in a computer format. Whatever method is used, it is vital that collection records be maintained accurately, completely, and currently, and that information contained in them be easily retrieved. Collection records should be carefully preserved and guarded. A duplicate copy of all vital collection records (e.g. on microfiche, microfilm) shall be made and stored outside the Center as a security precaution.

X. INSURANCE

A. General:

It is the policy of the Arts and Science Center to maintain all-risk fine arts insurance on its collection items in such amounts as shall be determined from time to time by the Board of Trustees.

B. Valuations of Collections:

1. Initially, collection items will be valued at their fair market value at the time of acquisition. Thereafter, updating valuation may be made by a qualified appraiser and the following procedure followed:

- a. Adjustments will be made as necessary.
- b. Collection records will be adjusted accordingly.
- c. Notification will be forwarded to the fine arts insurance company.

C. Insurance Records:

Insurance records will be maintained by the Curator or Director of Operations as required by the insurance underwriter.

D. Insuring Loans:

1. All outgoing loans and incoming loans will be insured at the value specified by the owner, insurance coverage to be provided either by the borrower or the lender, depending upon circumstances.

2. Property of others placed in the custody of The Arts & Science Center as a service or courtesy, not at the Center's request, will be insured by the Center only upon the authority of the Curator. If not insured by the Arts & Science Center, property of others will be accepted only if accompanied by a "Release from Liability" statement signed by the owner.

XI. INVENTORIES OF COLLECTIONS

A. General:

The Curator will insure that periodic physical inventories of collection items are conducted as frequently as necessary, but at least annually.

XII. ACCESS TO COLLECTIONS AND RECORDS

A. General:

Proper security protection of collections in storage and of collections records containing privileged information require that certain access rules be observed. These do not pertain to collections on public exhibition.

B. Access to Collections in Storage:

1. The Curator will designate those members of the staff who may have unlimited access to secure storage areas. Others, including staff and visitors, may only enter secure storage when accompanied by a staff member authorized for unaccompanied access.

2. A list of staff members authorized for unaccompanied access to secured areas will be prepared by the Curator, approved by the Executive Director, and filed with the Director of Operations. Additions or deletions to this list may be approved only by the Executive Director.

C. Access to Collection Records:

1. The Executive Director, Director of Operations, Curator of Collections and curatorial staff are authorized access to collection records.

2. All other requests may be approved by The Executive Director with the recommendation of Curator with considerations given to security, resources, and the laws governing privacy and freedom of information.

XIII. REPRODUCTION FEES AND REPRODUCTION RIGHTS

It is the responsibility of the Curator, subject to approval of the Executive Director, to develop and maintain a schedule of fees to be charged for reproducing collection records, supplying photographs and granting reproduction rights. Particular care must be taken in this respect to protect the intellectual rights (copyright, patent, trademark, or trade secret) with which collection items may be restricted or encumbered.