



National Gallery of Canada Musée des beaux-arts
du Canada

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY

June 2011

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**NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Under the *Museums Act*¹ (1990), the Gallery is empowered to:

- Collect works of art and other museum material;
- Document, record, preserve, conserve and restore works of art and other museum material;
- Undertake and sponsor any research related to its purposes and to museology, and communicate the results of that research;
- Provide facilities to permit qualified individuals to use and study its collection;
- Promote knowledge of and disseminate information about works of art and other museum material in its collection and art in general, throughout Canada and internationally, by such means of education and communication as are appropriate;
- Establish and foster liaison with other organizations with purposes similar to its purposes;
- Share the expertise of its staff by undertaking and sponsoring programs for training and apprenticeship in the professional and technical skills involved in the operation of other organizations with purposes similar to its purposes;
- Provide and arrange for professional and technical services to other organizations with purposes similar to its purposes.

The National Gallery of Canada (NGC) Library and Archives is to serve as the Gallery's research collection and archives. The collecting strength and national programs and services the Library and Archives provides have evolved through long tradition and a strong sense of national purpose and commitment. The Library and Archives has also forged strong links with institutions worldwide. Within each area of activity, the scope of the Library and Archives' contribution to the National Gallery's mandate is international.

2.0 POLICY OBJECTIVE

The purpose of the Library and Archives Collections Development Policy is to provide direction and establish the general principles for the management and continuing development of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives' collections.

3.0 APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

The Policy applies to the National Gallery of Canada and its affiliate museum the Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography (CMCP): all references to the NGC or the Gallery refer to both unless otherwise indicated.

The Policy should be read in conjunction with other Gallery policies, in particular the Research Policy² and the Acquisitions Policy³

Library and Archives services are provided in compliance with the Gallery's *Policy on Values, Ethics and Code of Conduct*⁴, as well as relevant legislation such as the *Official Languages Act*⁵, the *Access to Information Act*⁶, and the *Privacy Act*⁷.

4.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES

4.1 COLLECTING OBJECTIVES

Library and Archives research collections are considered museum materials. It is the Gallery's institutional objective to collect, organize, document and preserve museum materials, for both present and future needs, in support of its mandate. The Gallery undertakes, sponsors and promotes research related to its purposes and to museology.

4.2 COLLECTING CRITERIA

Research materials include both published and unpublished resources. Published materials include Canadian and non-Canadian publications in the field of the visual arts as well as rare and special collections. Unpublished materials include the Gallery's own historic institutional archives as well as unique archival collections relating to Canadian artists and other art subjects. Organization of the collections involves the provision of intellectual access to the materials through cataloguing, classification, indexing and digitization. In combination, the NGC Library and Archives collections constitute the national research collection in the visual arts, and are to be preserved as a vital part of Canada's cultural heritage.

The NGC Library and Archives collecting activities take into account the resources of other Canadian libraries, archives and museums, in particular the collecting by Library and Archives Canada (LAC), through legal deposit of mainstream Canadian publications. The NGC, therefore, collects Canadian visual arts printed ephemera, such as biographical information about artists, exhibition handlists and pamphlet catalogues, or non-Canadian publications covering the visual arts in general not covered by the LAC mandate.

4.2.1 PUBLISHED MATERIALS: GENERAL COLLECTIONS

Library materials are selected to support both current and future research needs. The Library collects, at the comprehensive level, published materials in every format documenting all aspects of the development of the visual arts in Canada. This includes works of art history written by Canadian authors or emanating from Canadian institutions and books illustrated by Canadian artists. Canadian publications in the livre d'artiste format are collected by *Library and Archives Canada* and by *Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec*, and the NGC Library does not set out to duplicate this collecting activity.

The NGC Library, at the research level, collects published materials on the visual arts and artists worldwide building on existing strengths (for example, post-medieval painting, prints, drawings and sculpture in western Europe and North America; photography; silver; and restoration and conservation), and seeking to consolidate holdings in emerging areas of curatorial activity (for example, Indigenous art). Materials on decorative arts, architecture, museology, art education, aesthetics, and ancillary and interdisciplinary subjects which provide a broad frame of reference for the art object and its interpretation are also collected.

Materials are collected within the following parameters:

- Languages: texts in Canada's two official languages, English and French, with other languages collected as needed
- Chronology: unrestricted, but with emphasis on the post-medieval period
- Geography: worldwide, with primary emphasis on Canada, followed by North America and Western Europe, and selective coverage for other geographical areas.

Many formats are collected, including:

- Print such as: monographs, catalogues raisonnés, periodicals, annual reports, occasional papers, conference proceedings, exhibition catalogues, collection catalogues, auction catalogues, dealer catalogues, theses, dissertations, reprints, facsimiles, dictionaries, encyclopedias and atlases. Hardcover publications are generally preferred to paperbacks. Print copies are generally preferred to electronic versions where both exist, in order to ensure long-term stable access, in particular to image content, which may be subject to copyright restrictions in the online environment.
- Electronic such as: e-journals, databases, indexes, bibliographies, book reviews, auction and sales records, finding aids, digitized texts, CD-ROMs and websites.
- Audiovisual such as: duplicates of artists' videos, CDs, DVDs, etc, held in the Gallery's art collection.
- Microforms.

The Library acquires multiple copies as follows:

- Publications by or affiliated with the Gallery: 7 copies
- Monographs and catalogues with Canadian visual arts content or a Canadian exhibition venue: up to 3 copies
- Canadian periodicals: up to 2 copies
- Canadian government publications: 1 copy in each official language.

4.2.2 PUBLISHED MATERIALS: RARE AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

The Library collects rare publications with special but not exclusive reference to Canada. These include:

- Books and periodicals illustrated by artists
- Volumes illustrated with engravings and photographs published in bound format (portfolios of loose engravings and photographs are collected by the Gallery's Prints and Drawings department and Photographs department)
- Artists' books and multiples, complementing the Art Metropole collection
- Printed ephemera
- Personal libraries of individual scholars, critics, artists or organizations, including association copies and annotated copies (Special Collections).

4.2.3 UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS: ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS

4.2.3.1 Institutional Archives of the NGC

The NGC Archives division maintains the institutional archives of the National Gallery of Canada. These archives are prime materials for research into the history of art in Canada. Records from Gallery departments and programs, which are no longer current and which have art historical value, research potential, or legal importance are selected for permanent preservation and transferred to the Archives. They include: operational records, exhibition files, correspondence with artists, war art records, loan records, facility records and records of the Board of Trustees. The institutional archives of the Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography are housed within, and administered by, the National Gallery of Canada Archives.

4.2.3.2 Non-NGC Archival Collections

The Archives collects archival materials relating to Canadian artists, art dealers, galleries, collectors, societies, art critics, curators, historians and trustees. Primarily works on paper, the collections include materials such as artists' journals, diaries, letters, photographs, sketchbooks, scrapbooks, teaching materials, bookplates, student and preparatory drawings, oral history interviews, business records, audiovisual materials, and electronic records.

Specific criteria apply to the collecting of non-Gallery archival materials, as follows. (Not all materials are expected to satisfy all criteria.)

- Canadian content: materials are collected with special but not exclusive reference to Canada
- National significance: materials with regional or local significance within Canada (from all regions) may be collected, but care is taken to ensure that appropriate regional or local collecting centres are also considered for these materials
- Pertinence to the Gallery: materials may relate to the National Gallery of Canada, its history, collections (including both the collection of works of art and the collections of Library and Archives), exhibitions, personalities and facilities
- Significance for research: materials have potential current or future significance to research which may be carried out by Gallery staff, Research Fellows or external researchers
- Viability: some research materials, for example those in modern media formats, are more demanding than others in terms of the commitment required in order to provide stable long-term access and preservation, necessitating consideration of both the level of commitment required and the existence of alternative collecting centres with appropriate facilities and expertise.

Under certain circumstances, materials with no intrinsic Canadian content may be collected if, for example:

- They reflect significant research interests or exhibition activities on the part of National Gallery of Canada curators
- They are present in Canada owing to family descent or other provenance.

4.2.4 UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS: OTHER COLLECTIONS

4.2.4.1 Documentation Files

The documentation files are a non-circulating archival collection, consisting of non-book material devoted to the visual arts with special but not exclusive reference to Canada. Files typically contain materials such as newspaper clippings, press releases, obituaries, magazine articles, exhibition announcements and invitations, printed ephemera, and biographical information, especially biographical information forms. These forms, sent to artists to be completed and returned to Library and Archives, are primary research material, and often comprise the only information available about the artist. In addition, electronic materials such as web pages, emails and image or document files are printed and added to the documentation files.

4.2.4.2 Visual Resources

The visual resource collections include slides, transparencies, negatives, image microforms, study photographs and digital image files. Subjects collected are mainly Canadian, North American and western European art; portraits of Canadian artists and collectors; the National Gallery of Canada, its history, buildings, staff, programs, art collection and temporary exhibition installations photographs acquired from external sources, but not used for publication; and photographs of items from Library and Archives collections.

4.3 METHODS OF ACQUISITION

Research materials are acquired by the following methods:

- Purchase
- Gift
- Bequest
- Exchange of Gallery publications with other museums, archives and libraries worldwide for receipt of equivalent publications (thus facilitating acquisitions and cost-effectively distributing Gallery publications)
- Mailing list receipt
- Deposit
 - Copies received for institutional archives from the Gallery internal sources
 - Copies of books or other materials received from external sources (i.e. in Collections Management or Copyrights under terms of loan or reproduction agreement)
- Media monitoring subscription (materials for documentation files)
- Transfer from other libraries.

Potential gifts are evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Relevance to the collection
- Examination of the material, physical condition
- Costs of processing, preservation, maintenance and housing
- In the case of non-Gallery archival materials, the specific criteria listed under 4.2.3.2.

The right is reserved to accept or refuse gifts, to determine the disposition of all or part of any gift, including whether the gift will be added to the collections, how long it will be retained, if it is to be catalogued, where it will be located, and any other matter related to its use or disposition. Gifts are not normally accepted with special conditions or restrictions attached to them. All gifts become the property of the National Gallery of Canada.

4.4 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Purchases are made on the authority of:

- the Chief, Library, Archives and Research Fellowship Programs, where the purchase price is less than \$25,000;
- the Director for any acquisition of more than \$25,000 and less than \$50,000;
- the Board Acquisitions Committee where the purchase price is \$50,000 or more but is less than \$1,000,000;
- the Board of Trustees, where the purchase price is \$1,000,000 or more.

Acquisitions by gift or bequest are made on the authority of:

- the Deputy Director and Chief Curator, Collections, Research and Education, where the fair market value of the gift or bequest is less than \$50,000;
- the Board Acquisitions Committee, where the fair market value is \$50,000 or more but is less than \$1,000,000;
- the Board of Trustees, where the fair market value is \$1,000,000 or more.

Published Materials: General Collections, Rare and Special Collections

Acquisitions are recommended by the Bibliographer, in consultation with the Chief, Library, Archives and Research Fellowship Programs, curators, library and archives staff, educators, Gallery staff and Library users. Acquisitions are approved by the Chief, Library, Archives and Research Fellowship Programs.

Unpublished Materials: Archival Collections

Accessions of institutional archives of the National Gallery of Canada are overseen by the Head of Archives, Documentation and Visual Resources, in collaboration with the Chief Information Officer.

Acquisitions for non-NGC archival collections are recommended by the Head of Archives, Documentation and Visual Resources, in consultation with the Chief, Library, Archives and Research Fellowship Programs, curators, and library and archives staff. Acquisitions are approved by the Chief, Library, Archives and Research Fellowship Programs.

Unpublished Materials: Other Collections

Accessions of documentation files and visual resources are overseen by the Head of Archives, Documentation and Visual Resources.

5.0 DEFINITIONS

Legal deposit: the law under which Canadian publishers are obliged to send copies of their publications to Library and Archives Canada.

Association copy: a book that has some indication of having belonged to the author, or someone closely associated with them.

Catalogue raisonné: a complete descriptive catalogue, typically of a single artist's work.

Livre d'artiste: a book published in a limited edition, in which the illustrations are original works executed directly by an artist.

6.0 INQUIRIES

Questions concerning the interpretation of this policy should be addressed to the Chief, Library, Archives and Research Fellowship Programs.

REFERENCES

¹ Museums Act.

² Research Policy. Approved by the Board of Trustees on March 23, 2004. Revised version approved by the Board of Trustees on December 7, 2009.

³ Acquisitions Policy. Approved by the Board of Trustees on June 20, 2006. Amended by the Board of Trustees December 4, 2007.

⁴ Values, Ethics and Code of Conduct. Approved by the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery of Canada on September 15, 2009.

⁵ Official Languages Act.

⁶ Access to Information Act.

⁷ Privacy Act.