



**National Gallery
of Canada**

**Musée des beaux-arts
du Canada**

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION

Under the *Museums Act*, the National Gallery of Canada (the NGC or 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;
- Establish and foster liaison with other organizations with purposes similar to its purposes; and
- Provide and arrange for professional and technical services to other organizations with purposes similar to its purposes.

The NGC's Library and Archives (Library and Archives) houses the Gallery's research collection and archives. The collecting strength of the Library and Archives and the national programs and services have evolved through a strong sense of national purpose. The Library and Archives division has forged and will uphold strong links with institutions worldwide. Within each area of activity, the scope of the Library and Archives' contribution to the Gallery's mandate is international.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Library and Archives Policy is to provide direction and establish the general principles for the management and continuing development of the NGC Library and Archives' collections.

3. APPLICATION

This Policy applies to the Board of Trustees, all employees, interns, fellows, and volunteers. Primary responsibility for implementation of this Policy rests with the Deputy Director, Collections and Research and Chief Curator, under the direction of the Gallery's Director and CEO.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with other Gallery policies, in particular the *Research Policy* and the *Acquisitions Policy*

Library and Archives services will be provided in compliance with the Gallery's *Code of Conduct* and relevant legislation such as the *Official Languages Act*, the *Access to Information Act*, and the *Privacy Act*.

4. DEFINITIONS

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

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.

Research collecting level: the collecting level that supports dissertation and independent research. It includes all important reference works and a wide selection of specialized monographs, extensive coverage of monographs on artists and journals, and major indexing and abstracting services in the field. Foreign language material is included.

Comprehensive collecting level: the collecting level that endeavours, so far as is reasonably possible, to include all significant works of recorded knowledge in all languages, for a necessarily defined and limited field.

5. POLICY

5.1 COLLECTING OBJECTIVES

The NGC Library and Archives holdings constitute the national research collection in the visual arts, and are considered museum material. It is the Gallery's institutional objective to collect, organize, document and preserve museum material, as a vital part of Canada's cultural heritage, for both present and future needs, in support of its mandate. The Gallery will undertake, sponsor (where appropriate) and promote research related to its purposes and to museology.

5.2 COLLECTING AREAS

The NGC Library and Archives will collect research material including both published and unpublished resources. Published material will encompass Canadian and non-Canadian publications in the field of the visual arts as well as rare and special collections. Unpublished material will include the Gallery's historic institutional archives as well as unique archival collections relating to Canadian artists and other art subjects.

The Gallery will properly organize the collections through cataloguing, classification, indexing and digitization so as to facilitate intellectual access to the material.

Additionally, the Library and Archives collecting activities will take into account the resources of other Canadian libraries, archives and museums, in particular those collected by LAC, through legal deposit of mainstream Canadian publications. Consequently, the Gallery will collect material that does not fall within the mandate of LAC, including 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.

5.2.1 PUBLISHED MATERIAL: GENERAL COLLECTIONS

Library material will be selected to support both current and future research needs. The Library and Archives will collect, at the comprehensive level, published material in every format that documents all aspects of the development of the visual arts in Canada. This will include art history-related works 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 LAC and by *Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec*; accordingly, the NGC Library and Archives division will not duplicate this collecting activity.

The Library and Archives, at the research level, will collect published material 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). Material 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, will also be collected.

A. Parameters

Library material will be collected within the following parameters:

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

B. Formats

Library material will include many formats:

- a. 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, to ensure long-term stable access, in particular to image content, which may be subject to copyright restrictions in the online environment.

- b. Electronic such as: e-journals, databases, indexes, bibliographies, book reviews, auction and sales records, finding aids, digitized texts, CD-ROMs and websites.

- c. Audiovisual such as: duplicates of artists' videos, CDs, DVDs, etc, held in the Gallery's art collection.
- d. Microforms.

C. Copies

The Library and Archives will acquire multiple copies as follows:

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

5.2.2 PUBLISHED MATERIAL: RARE AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

The Library and Archives will collect rare publications with special but not exclusive reference to Canada. These will include:

- a. Books and periodicals illustrated by artists;
- b. Volumes illustrated with engravings and photographs that are published in bound format (portfolios of loose engravings and photographs are collected by the Gallery's Prints and Drawings department and its Canadian Photography Institute);
- c. Artists' books and multiples, complementing the Art Metropole collection;
- d. Printed ephemera; and
- e. Personal libraries of individual scholars, critics, artists or organizations, including association copies and annotated copies (commonly known as special collections).

5.2.3 UNPUBLISHED MATERIAL: ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS

A. Institutional Archives of the NGC

The Library and Archives will maintain the institutional archives of the Gallery. These archives are prime materials for research into both the history of art in Canada, as well as the history of the institution. Records from Gallery departments and programs, which are no longer in current use and, which have administrative, legal, fiscal, art historical and research value, will be selected for permanent preservation, and transferred to the Library and Archives. These will include: records related to the management and oversight of the Gallery, including the records of the Board of Trustees; operational records; exhibition records; loan records; facility records; correspondence with artists; and war art program records. Personnel files (employee

compensation, pension and benefit-related information), which are held by the Gallery's Human Resources Department for a period of time after the termination of employment, and are then transferred to Library and Archives Canada.

B. Non-NGC Archival Collections

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

Specific criteria will apply to the collecting of non-Gallery archival material, as follows. Not all types of material are expected to satisfy all criteria.

- i. Canadian content: material **will be collected** with special but not exclusive reference to Canada;
- ii. National significance: material of national significance will be collected but material with regional or local significance within Canada (from all regions) **may also be collected**, but care will be taken to ensure that appropriate regional or local collecting centres are also considered for this material;
- iii. Pertinence to the Gallery: material that relates 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 **may be collected**;
- iv. Significance for research: material that has or could have current or future significance to research, which may be undertaken by Gallery staff, Research Fellows or external researchers **may also be collected**; and
- v. Viability: some research material, for example that in modern media formats, requires stable long-term access and preservation, the level of commitment required, and the existence of alternative collecting centres, with appropriate facilities and expertise **will be considered**.

Under certain circumstances, material with no Canadian content may be collected if, for example, it reflects significant research interests or exhibition activities on the part of NGC curators; or it is present in Canada, owing to family descent or other provenance.

5.2.4 UNPUBLISHED MATERIAL: OTHER COLLECTIONS

A. 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 will contain material 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 files are printed and added to the documentation files.

B. Visual Resources

The visual resource collections will 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 NGC's 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.

5.3 ACQUISITIONS

A. Acquisition Methods

Research material will be acquired by the following methods:

- a. Purchase;
- b. Gift;
- c. Bequest;
- d. Exchange of the Gallery publications with other museums, archives and libraries worldwide for receipt of equivalent publications thus facilitating acquisitions and cost-effective distribution of Gallery publications;
- e. Complimentary copies;
- f. Deposit:
 - i. Copies received for institutional archives from internal Gallery sources;
 - ii. Copies of books or other material received from external sources (i.e. under terms of loan or under terms of reproduction agreements); and
- g. Transfer from other libraries.

B. Criteria for Accepting Gifts

Potential gifts will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- a. Relevance to the national collection;
- b. Examination of the material and its physical condition;
- c. Cost of processing, preservation, maintenance and housing; and

- d. In the case of non-Gallery archival material, the specific criteria listed under 5.2.3.B will apply.

C. Conditions for Accepting Gifts

The Gallery reserves the right to accept or refuse gifts. Moreover, it reserves the right to:

- a. Determine the disposition of all or part of any gift,
- b. Whether the gift will be added to the collections,
- c. How long it will be retained,
- d. If it is to be catalogued,
- e. Where it will be located, and
- f. Any other matter related to its use or disposition.

Gifts will not normally be accepted with special conditions or restrictions attached to them. All gifts will become the property of the NGC.

5.4 ROLES AND AUTHORITIES

5.4.1 ROLES

A. Published Material: General Collections, Rare and Special Collections

Acquisitions will be made by the Chief, Library, Archives and Research Fellowship Programs in consultation with the Head, Reader Services, and, where appropriate, the Gallery staff and Library users.

B. Unpublished Material: Archival Collections

Accessions of institutional archives of the NGC will be overseen by the NGC Archivist (Institutional Archives), in collaboration with the Information Management Coordinator.

Acquisitions for non-NGC archival collections will be recommended by the Archivist (Private fonds), the Archivist (Institutional Archives), curators, and Library and Archives staff. Such acquisitions will be approved by the Chief, Library, Archives and Research Fellowship Programs.

C. Unpublished Material: Other Collections

Accessions of documentation files and visual resources will be overseen by the Head, Reader Services and by the Archivist (Private fonds), respectively.

5.4.2 AUTHORITIES

A. Purchases

Purchases will be made on the authority of:

- a. the Chief, Library, Archives and Research Fellowship Programs, where the purchase price is less than \$25,000;
- b. the Director and CEO for any acquisition of more than \$25,000 and less than \$100,000;
- c. the Board of Trustees' Acquisitions Committee, where the purchase price is \$100,000 or more but is less than \$1,000,000; and
- d. the entire Board of Trustees, where the purchase price is \$1,000,000 or more.

For the purpose of the dollar ceilings expressed above, "purchase price" refers to the transaction price for the items to be acquired, and where applicable includes auction house commissions.

B. Gifts and/or Bequests

Acquisitions by gift or bequest will be made on the authority of:

- a. the Deputy Director, Collections and Research and Chief Curator, where the fair market value of the gift or bequest is less than \$100,000;
- b. the Board of Trustees' Acquisitions Committee, where the fair market value is \$100,000 or more but is less than \$1,000,000; and
- c. the entire Board of Trustees, where the fair market value is \$1,000,000 or more.

6.0 INQUIRIES

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

7.0 REFERENCES

Access to Information Act
Museums Act
NGC Code of Conduct
NGC Research Policy
NGC Acquisitions Policy
Official Languages Act
Privacy Act