

AGNES ETHERINGTON ART CENTRE AT QUEEN'S

COLLECTING MANDATE

18 March 2014

1.0 Principles and Values

1.1 The Agnes Etherington Art Centre (the "Art Centre") serves the communities of Queen's University, the City of Kingston and the surrounding region as a cultural locus devoted to the collection, research, interpretation and exhibition of visual art.

The Permanent Collection ("the Collection") is held in the public trust, and its active development and maintenance are essential to the fulfillment of the Art Centre's mandate and to its wider responsibility to further the cause of art in the community. The Collection is integral to the Art Centre's institutional direction and identity.

1.3 The Art Centre's collecting practices are guided by a formal policy.

1.4 The Art Centre adheres to best museological practices in its collecting activities, in compliance with relevant laws, ethical guidelines and policies (see the Agnes Etherington Art Centre Acquisition Policy). Service to the public good propels Art Centre collecting practices, and is the fundamental standard against which decisions are measured. Furthermore, the Art Centre is designated a Category A institution, and as such is governed by a legal framework regulated by the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board, Department of Canadian Heritage of the Government of Canada.

2.0 Building the Collection

2.1 The Art Centre aims to develop a collection that is of the highest possible quality and is distinct, cohesive, and representative of its mandate.

2.2 Works are acquired via:

2.2.1 Purchase

2.2.2 Donation

2.2.3 Bequest

2.2.4 Exchange

2.3 To ensure the healthy development of the Collection, Art Centre staff cultivates fruitful relationships with donors, and appropriate art dealers and auction houses, based on mutual benefit and respect.

2.4 To support strategic purchase of works of art to productively shape the collection, Art Centre staff seeks resources from multiple sources including patrons, funding agencies and foundations. Endowment funds designated for acquisitions to the Collection are, additionally, managed appropriately, and income from these funds is used exclusively for that purpose.

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- 2.5 Consideration of offers of donation to the Collection and the steps in their legal transfer to the Art Centre follow the practices laid out in the Art Centre's Donation Procedures document, as well as in relevant Gift-in-Kind guidelines established by Queen's University.
- 2.6 Because acquisitions are permanent, with the Collection held in the public trust in perpetuity, deaccessioning runs contrary to the concept and reality of the Collection, and is therefore to be avoided in all but the most exceptional circumstances.
- 2.7 The Art Centre does not acquire works for a "study collection."
- 2.8 Because acceptance of works of art into the Collection requires the transfer of legal title by Deed of Gift, the Art Centre does not accept promised gifts. Similarly, the Art Centre does not entertain conditional offers of donation, such as usufruct gifts, or gifts requiring permanent display.
- 2.9 All acquisitions must meet the following criteria:
 - 2.9.1 Satisfactory proof of the work's authenticity, documentation of its provenance (with particular attention paid to works that may have been subjected to Nazi-era spoliation and historical First Peoples' artifacts), and confirmation of the donor/seller's legal title.
 - 2.9.2 The terms of sale or donation must be unrestricted.
 - 2.9.3 The Art Centre must possess the resources to maintain, interpret and preserve the work of art, or have a reasonable expectation of obtaining them. The Art Centre maintains the integrity of the Collection by collecting works of art in areas in which it has in-house expertise.
- 2.10 Factors shaping priorities for acquisition to be assessed by staff and the External Acquisition Committee are:
 - 2.10.1 Aesthetic quality
 - 2.10.2 Cultural significance and contribution to art history
 - 2.10.3 Usefulness for exhibition, research and teaching
 - 2.10.4 Relevance to existing holdings in the Collection
 - 2.10.5 Relevance to the Art Centre's regional and social context
 - 2.10.6 Relationship to the Art Centre's research and exhibition history
 - 2.10.7 Physical condition and stability
- 2.11 All acquisition activity by Art Centre staff, whether by purchase, donation, bequest or exchange, is undertaken in an arm's-length relationship with the parties involved.

3.0 Collecting Areas

- 3.1 The Collection contains over 16,000 objects accrued since 1957, including significant holdings in contemporary, Canadian historical, European historical and West African art. While all potential acquisitions must be measured against the criteria outlined in Section 2, priorities for acquisition vary among collecting areas, and will be shaped over time by the Art Centre's director and curators in response to/anticipation of evolving internal expertise and capacity, and external

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opportunities. Priority areas for collecting are articulated in the Acquisition Policy, and are updated with Policy review every five years.

3.2 With staff expertise and substantial holdings in contemporary art, Canadian historical art and European historical art, the Art Centre is actively collecting in these areas:

3.2.1 The Contemporary Art Collection (here defined as all works of art by living artists and all works made in the previous 25 years) offers a material record of critically relevant visual art in Canada that extends and speaks to the Art Centre's historical collections and its context. Non-Canadian works are considered when they are pertinent to existing holdings, the region, or to Art Centre research and exhibition activities.

3.2.2 The Canadian Historical Art Collection reflects the history of Canadian fine art in all media. In addition to the Euro-American tradition, this collection includes significant Inuit and First Nations art and artifacts. It encompasses three collections of decorative arts intimately connected to regional history: the Queen's University Collection of Canadian Dress, the Heritage Quilt Collection and the Silver Collection. The Collection reflects the evolving cultural matrix of Canada.

3.2.3 The European Historical Art Collection, which includes The Bader Collection, features significant holdings in 17th-century Dutch painting, with an emphasis on Rembrandt and his school, as well as Renaissance, Mannerist, and Baroque drawings and a concentration of European prints from the 16th to the 20th centuries. In addition, the collection embraces a smaller concentration of British paintings of the Baroque period.

3.3 Static collections: the following areas of the Collection will not be further developed through acquisition by purchase, gift, donation or exchange:

3.3.1 The Justin and Elisabeth Lang Collection of African Art is one of the most significant representations of African art in Canada.

3.3.2 The Etherington House Collection is comprised of furnishings, fixtures, art and decorative arts associated with and displayed in the historic Agnes Etherington House.

3.3.3 A small collection of Canadian and American pressed glass of the 19th and early 20th centuries rounds out our decorative arts holdings.

3.3.4 The University Transfer Collection consists of diverse artifacts, primarily from ancient Egyptian and Roman cultures, Oceanic Aboriginal cultures and Asian cultures. These objects were transferred to the Art Centre at its founding in 1957, from various campus locations.

4.0 Mandate Renewal

4.1 In order to ensure its continued relevance and value, this mandate will be reviewed every five years by the Art Centre's director, following appropriate consultation with curatorial staff. The updated mandate will be submitted to the External Acquisitions Committee for information, and reported to the Art Centre's Advisory Board and to appropriate university authorities for approval.