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## Collections Management Policy Denver Art Museum

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(Revisions to Inventory Policy approved by Collections Committee, December 14, 2021)

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## **Executive Summary**

The Denver Art Museum's Collections Management Policy (CMP) is a core institutional document that outlines the Museum's collection stewardship standards and is an essential part of the Museum's operating mission and accredited professional status. DAM's CMP is not a single policy but a series of connected policies, statements and associated guidelines and procedures. These articulate the Museum's professional standards regarding objects left under the Museum's care and serves as a guide for staff and related stakeholders.

DAM's CMP was developed in 2011 in association with DAM's reaccreditation by AAM. This 2019 updated version retains the same sections, has been revised to recognize changes in collection-related approvals and transactions, has been simplified to remove redundancies, is reformatted and reorganized in some sections for greater clarity, and contains new or revised procedures and guidelines.

The first CMP section documents the Museum's updated **Mission Statement**. The **Primary Statement of Authority** describes the approval bodies responsible for acquisition, deaccession and incoming loan decisions as well as the staff responsible for implementing the CMP and the day-to-day care of the collections. The Museum's **Collections Policy and Collecting Plan** outlines the focus, goals, and considerations for collections growth and refinement as well as summary of the collection strengths.

**Collection Management Activities** are the core of the CMP and summarizes requirements, considerations, outside professional organizational recommendations, and staff responsibilities for collection-related activities. The **Acquisitions and Accessioning Policy** provides guidance on the following collection transactions or aspects: purchases, auction purchases, gifts, Year-end gifts, promised gifts, bequests, fractional gifts, found in collection, abandoned property, change in legal status and credit lines. The **Deaccession and Removal Policy** outlines standards under which the Museum will undertake collection refinement, approval bodies, and procedural and disposition requirements of the permanent and non-accessioned and apparatus collections. The **Incoming Loan Policy** and the **Outgoing Loan Policy** detail considerations, approval, and procedural requirements for implementing incoming and outgoing loans.

The **Care of Collections** section focuses on the professional standards that the Museum and its staff should maintain to ensure the long-term preservation of collections. Staff and care responsibilities are detailed relating to oversight, storage, handling and maintenance. Art handling guidelines, the Integrated pest management program and requirements, and environmental monitoring and associated guideline appendices are outlined and referenced. **Collections Access and Use** defines the Museum's responsibilities regarding collection accessibility, research requests, and tours. The **Documentation of Collections** section recognizes documentation as a significant aspect of collections care and highlights responsible staff, types of documentation maintained for the collections, and records accessibility and modification requirements. The **Inventory Policy** describes the

importance of a regular program for inventorying the collection to support best practices for accountability around collection locations and movement. The **Security and Risk Management** section highlights staff security responsibilities for the collections with references to appended incident and damage notification and response procedures and the Museum's Collections Emergency Plan. The Museum's insurance coverage of the collections are detailed including policy coverage standards under the City and County of Denver, commercial policy options, participation in the Arts and Artifacts Indemnity Program, and staff responsibility for oversight of appropriate coverage and issuance of certificates of insurance. General standards and procedures regarding reproduction of the collection are outlined in the **Rights and Reproduction Policy** and the associated and appended Rights and Reproduction handbook.

**Staff Responsibilities and Ethics Policy Relating to Collections Oversight** addresses staff ethical standards for collections oversight, the Museum's endorsement of associated Museum professional organization codes of ethics, and the Museum's own Conflict of Interest Policy. The Museum's policy on staff appraisals and information provided by staff related to object information and scholarly opinions including the requirement for a disclaimer in written correspondence is also outlined. **Monitoring and Revising the Collection Management Policy and Procedures** section documents the requirement for a regular program of review for the entire CMP. The **Definitions** section completes the CMP and provides useful collection-related definitions for terms used and referenced in the CMP.

In each section of the CMP, related collection plans, procedures, guidelines, additional policies, and document samples are referenced as numbered **Appendices**, which can be reviewed separately. These Appendices will be updated, revised, and posted as needed.

## **I. Mission Statement**

The Denver Art Museum is an educational, nonprofit resource that sparks creative thinking and expression through transformative experiences with art. Its holdings reflect the city and region—and provide invaluable ways for the community to learn about cultures from around the world.

The mission of the Denver Art Museum is to enrich the lives of present and future generations through the acquisition, presentation, and preservation of works of art, supported by exemplary scholarship and public programs related to both its permanent collections and to temporary exhibitions presented by the museum.

The Museum staff follow additional objectives as laid out in updated mission-related initiatives as approved by the Board of Trustees (**see Appendix 1: Vision 2021.**)

## **II. Primary Statement of Authority**

The Denver Art Museum is a Colorado nonprofit corporation and registered 501(c) (3) with the IRS. It is governed by its Board of Trustees and administered by a professional staff. All of these individuals are united in their commitment to the institution's mission, vision, and responsibilities.

The Museum's Director is responsible for supervising the proper implementation of the Collections Management Policy. The Director delegates the day-to-day care and management of the collections to the Chief Curator and curators, the Director of Conservation, the Chief of Exhibition and Collection Services, and their associated staff.

Acquisition, deaccession, and incoming loan decisions are made through a review process comprising three committees. The Director or designate, working with the Museum's staff, proposes works of art to be purchased, gifted, borrowed, or deaccessioned to the Acquisitions Group, a non-voting body consisting of staff members. Gifts with restrictions, long-term loans and purchases over \$25,000, and deaccessions undergo further review by a Collections Committee of the Board of Trustees. Curators or designates present justification for recommending the works of art. The Collections Committee is solely responsible for voting on these proposals, and any Committee member with potential conflicts of interest is responsible for making such conflicts known in advance of the vote.

The final decision on approval for works of art recommended by the Collections Committee rests with the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees votes on the proposal and agrees on sources of funding. Official meeting minutes document all Committee and Board actions pertaining to the collections.

### **III. Collections Policy and Collecting Plan**

Fulfillment of the Denver Art Museum’s mission statement to “enrich the lives of present and future generations through the acquisition, presentation and preservation of works of art” critically depends upon the quality, depth, and scope of its collections. Therefore, an essential goal of the Museum shall be the continuing expansion and refinement of the Permanent Collection. Most of the principal cultures and periods of world art throughout history are represented in the collections, including areas of national or international importance. Other holdings are less comprehensive, or are represented by only a few examples. In light of limited acquisition resources and the long-term costs of properly housing and preserving artworks, the Museum must collect selectively, emphasizing excellence over quantity or comprehensiveness. Aesthetic excellence will have the highest priority, with secondary consideration given to historical representation, rarity, and condition. Each Curatorial Department will devise and regularly update a collecting plan (see **Appendix 2: Collection Plans**) that will guide its efforts to build and improve the collection through both purchases and gifts. The Museum will support its existing collection commitments and strengths, strategically build collections when new opportunities arise, and seize special opportunities to acquire outstanding individual objects in other major fields.

The Denver Art Museum holds comprehensive, internationally distinguished collections of American Indian, pre-Columbian, and Spanish Colonial art. Additional areas of strength include European, American, and Western American painting and sculpture; modern design and graphics; modern and contemporary fine art; Asian, African, and Oceanic art; photography; and textile art and fashion. The Museum also has a historical dedication to collecting art produced in Colorado and the Rocky Mountain region.

### **IV. Collections Management Activities**

#### **A. Acquisitions and Accessions Policy**

The Denver Art Museum will ensure that the acquisition and accessioning of artwork adheres to the established Collections Policy and Collecting Plan and advances the Museum’s mission, goals, resources, and priorities. The Museum’s Board of Trustees, Collections Committee, Director, curators, conservators, and Exhibition and Collection Services staff share responsibility for the recommendation, approval, and processing of proposed acquisitions. Artworks may be acquired by the Museum through means of gift, purchase, exchange, bequest, and any other transaction by which title passes legally to the Museum.

The Denver Art Museum’s Board of Trustees, Collections Committee, and staff members will adhere to specific criteria when considering proposed acquisitions. Consideration shall include but is not limited to: relevance to the Museum’s overall mission; exceptional aesthetic quality; authenticity; consistency with curatorial collection development goals; exhibitable nature; potential for research and scholarship; and that the

artwork has basic integrity and is in an acceptable state of preservation that can be documented and maintained. Additional consideration shall be given as to whether proper care can be provided and if acceptance will result in future collecting obligations or expenses relating to conservation, storage, or display. The Museum will avoid acquisitions that restrict or inhibit its freedom to present and refine the collections and it will accept Restricted Gifts only with the recommendation of the Collections Committee and approval of the Board of Trustees.

The Denver Art Museum's Board of Trustees, Collections Committee, and staff members will not recommend for accession any artwork that is known to have been stolen or illegally imported into the United States in violation of state, federal, or international law, treaties, or conventions. Applicable federal laws include but are not limited to the National Stolen Property Act (NSPA), the Convention on the Cultural Property Implementation Act (CCPIA), sanctions enforced by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), and the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

All proposed acquisitions will fully comply with the requirements of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, future amendments to the Act, and the Museum's stated Policy on Collection Use and Repatriation of Cultural Items (**See Appendix 3: NAGPRA Collections Policy**).

All proposed acquisitions will be evaluated to ensure that they are legally owned by the donor or vendor and possess clear and unencumbered title. Reasonable inquiry and research will be made to learn the provenance of the artwork under consideration for accession, including efforts to obtain accurate and written documentation regarding a complete ownership history, the countries in which the work has been located and when, import and export documentation if relevant, the exhibition and publication history of the work, whether any claims to ownership have been made, whether the work of art appears in relevant databases of stolen works, and the circumstances under which the work of art is being offered to the Museum. The Museum will take all reasonable steps to resolve Nazi-era provenance status of proposed acquisitions.

If research exposes credible evidence of unlawful appropriation without subsequent restitution for works already in the collection, the Museum will take prudent and necessary steps to resolve the status of the artwork as outlined in the Museum's stated Policy on Works of Art Unlawfully Appropriated in the Nazi/Holocaust Era (1933-1953) (**See Appendix 4: Nazi-era Collections Policy**).

The Museum additionally will follow recommendations issued by the Association of Art Museum Directors and the American Alliance of Museums regarding acquisitions and the public posting of certain acquisitions of archaeological materials, ancient art, and Nazi-era art.

All proposed acquisitions must be recommended and assigned to an established Curatorial Department or the Learning and Engagement Department and must be



designated to one of the following collection types: Permanent Collection, Apparatus (Education) Collection, or Non-Accessioned Collection (See Section VII for Definitions).

Formal recommendation, consideration, and approval of all proposed acquisitions are made under the following general guidelines and approval bodies:

1. Purchases

All purchases valued greater than \$25,000 are reviewed and recommended by the Collections Committee for approval by the Board of Trustees. Purchases valued under \$25,000 are approved by the Director. The Collections Committee may recommend to the Board of Trustees a change in the proposed purchase approval monetary limit with final approval by the Board of Trustees. The Museum will seek representations and warranties when buying works of art that the seller has good title and that the work of art is free from any liens, claims, and encumbrances.

2. Auction Purchases

Individual auction purchases over \$25,000 are reviewed by the Collections Committee by proxy in order to facilitate timely bidding. All maximum auction bids are pre-approved by the Director, regardless of value, before further consideration (**See Appendix 5: Auction Bid Approval Form**).

3. Gifts

Proposed gifts with restrictions generally are not accepted into the collection, and no commitment should be made by the Museum as to the attribution or long-term display of a gift. The Museum should make no guarantees that a gift will be retained by the Museum in perpetuity. Should an artwork come with a donor restriction, the restriction will be clearly documented and fully considered by the highest voting authority prior to acquisition.

Acquisition proposals must include a written letter of offer from the donor that includes any and all proposed restrictions or encumbrances. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, the Director reviews and approves all gifts without restrictions. The Director, Collections Committee, and Board of Trustees review all gifts with restrictions with final approval for acquisition resting with the Board of Trustees. For purposes of gift acceptance, the date of the Museum's authorized approval signature on the Acquisition Proposal Form and/or the Gift Acceptance Letter is considered the formal date of acceptance.

The Museum must complete the formal acceptance and documentation of a gift in the same donor tax year in order for the donor to realize a Federal income tax deduction. The Museum shall comply with all tax laws and Internal Revenue Service reporting requirements, including, upon a donor's request, the completion

of the donee statement of IRS Form 8283 and, where applicable, the filing of IRS Form 8282. In adherence to IRS regulations, the Museum cannot provide appraisals or a valuation of any kind. Donors should be referred to their own tax advisors for all but the most basic queries regarding donations to the Museum.

#### 4. Year-end Gifts

All year-end gifts without restrictions are approved by the Director, or staff member empowered by the Director, on behalf of the Board of Trustees by end of the day December 31. For donors to claim a tax deduction within a specific calendar year, the Museum must have physical possession or control of the artwork before year end.

#### 5. Promised Gifts

Offers of Promised Gifts should be brought to the attention of the Director, appropriate curator, and Development Office when appropriate and documented if possible with a binding or non-binding pledge agreement (**See Appendix 6: Pledge Gift Agreement**). Promised Gifts in the custody of the Museum will be treated as loans. Promised Gifts are formally accepted when the artwork is in the physical possession of the Museum and has gone through the formal acquisition review and approval process.

#### 6. Bequests

A bequest is the transfer of property under the terms of a deceased person's will. When the Museum learns it has been named in a potential donor's will, effort shall be made to obtain a copy of the will or codicil for documentation and record-keeping purposes. The Museum is under no obligation to accept artwork bequests. A copy of the will and a signed receipt will provide the documentation to prove transfer of title for a bequest. If an artwork is not named in a will as a bequest to the Denver Art Museum but the estate chooses to offer it for donation, the proposed acquisition will be treated as a gift from the estate and will follow the standard accession approval process for gifts.

#### 7. Fractional Gifts

Fractional or partial gifts are artworks for which a partial ownership interest and title has been deeded to the Museum; the remaining interest is held by the donor. Under current federally mandated legislation, the Museum requires all donors of Fractional Gifts to transfer the remaining ownership interest within a specified period of time. The Museum will negotiate terms of physical possession and use that follow federal statute requirements and ensure the proper care and protection of the artwork.

## 8. Found in Collection

A Found in Collection object is a work that has been stored with the collection for a significant period of time and lacks any meaningful documentation as to how it was acquired by the Museum. The artwork's undisturbed possession for an extended period supports a presumption that ownership was transferred to the Museum at the time the artwork was obtained. Unless and until a claimant comes forward with proof of ownership, the Museum shall continue to treat a Found in Collection object as its own.

## 9. Abandoned Property

The Museum will make every effort to maintain current documentation for all loans in its care. In the rare circumstance that a loan cannot be returned to its owner after reasonable efforts, the Museum reserves the right to acquire such loans into the collection. Abandoned loans will be carefully researched and documented prior to acquisition. Abandoned Property is subject to Colorado Revised Statutes 38-14-101 through 112. The Museum will adhere to procedures for proposed Abandoned Property in transferring Abandoned Property to its collections (**See Appendix 7: Abandoned Property Procedures**).

## 10. Change in Legal Status

On occasion, artworks that have been accessioned into the Permanent Collection, Apparatus Collection, or Non-Accessioned Collection are re-evaluated for transfer to another collection status. Any change in collection status type must be approved by the Director, the Collections Committee, and the Board of Trustees.

## 11. Credit Lines

All acquisitions will acknowledge and credit the donor or funding source on all records and published sources, where appropriate, as determined and documented by the appropriate Curatorial Department (**see Appendix 8: Credit Line Guidelines**). Other departments including Development and Publications may be consulted as to appropriateness of credit lines.

## B. Deaccession and Removal Policy

Collection refinement, the process by which the Museum continually strives to improve collection quality by eliminating redundant or lower quality works, is an essential task. Guided by its collecting philosophy and Curatorial Department collecting plans, the Museum will regularly consider the disposal of works of art of secondary quality, or work represented in the collection by better examples. Disposal methods, which may include auction, direct sale, exchange, or donation, must honor the Museum's fiduciary responsibilities to both the public and donors. Funds realized from the disposal of works of art may be used only for acquisitions. Works acquired through trade or with funds

from deaccessioning will bear credit to the donor(s) of the original object(s) when appropriate.

The Museum will adhere to policies issued by the American Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) regarding deaccessioning and will exercise care and caution in the evaluation of an artwork when it is proposed for removal. An artwork should be considered for deaccessioning only if the overall collections are improved by its removal. Deaccessioning shall not be contemplated in response to current art vogues or on the basis of any individual's taste.

#### Permanent Collection Deaccessioning

All artworks from the Permanent Collection considered for deaccession must be researched in advance for confirmation of legal title, donor restrictions, and sensitivity issues. Donors, heirs, living artists, and other appropriate interested parties should be notified with a letter of intent to deaccession in advance of Collections Committee or Board of Trustees presentation.

To be considered for deaccession, an artwork must be determined to fulfill at least one of the following criteria:

- not appropriate to an art museum
- not in physical condition to be exhibited; unsuitable as a study piece; a known fake or forgery
- a duplication of or inferior to an artwork already in the collection
- a secondary or lesser quality artwork that does not represent a specific area well
- artworks eligible under NAGPRA criteria
- artworks eligible under Nazi-era repatriation criteria
- artworks found not to be consistent with applicable laws, found to be stolen, or illegally imported
- requirements for acceptable care or display cannot be met
- no longer in keeping with the mission and/or collecting goals of the Museum
- Decision making should also consider a) quality relative to the Denver Art Museum's present holdings, b) the stature of the collections in which the artwork belongs, c) "one-of-a-kind" or unique nature, d) inferiority to a proposed acquisition in the area presently under consideration.

If rationale for removal of an artwork does not conform to any of the above criteria, then a cogent alternative rationale must be presented to and approved by the Collections Committee and Board of Trustees.

If a Permanent Collection artwork considered for deaccession is estimated by the curator to be valued at more than \$10,000, two outside and independent appraisals shall be secured in writing and presented with the deaccession proposal paperwork.

The Director, Collections Committee, and Board of Trustees must review and formally approve all proposed deaccessions from the Permanent Collection.

#### Non-Accessioned Collection and Apparatus (Education Collection) Removals

The Director is responsible for review and formal approval for the removal of all Non-Accessioned Collection and Apparatus artworks, on behalf of the Board of Trustees and subject to the criteria listed above.

Removals will be executed according to established Deaccession and Non-Accessioned Collection Removal procedures (**See Appendix 9: Deaccession and NAC Removal Guidelines**).

#### Disposition

The manner of disposition for all Permanent Collection deaccession, Non-Accessioned collection, and Apparatus removals must be approved by the Director. Given the diverse nature of artworks that may be selected for disposal, the Museum recognizes several potential means of removal such as public auctions, sale to private collections or dealers, exchange, donations, repatriation, or destruction. Consideration will be given to transferring works to other public institutions where possible. The Museum will work with partner institutions to see that appropriate artworks are transferred to serve the greatest good for the community or the specific field that the artwork or collection represents. The Museum will seek to obtain the highest compensation for any artwork sold or auctioned, and shall not dispose of artworks by sale or transfer directly or indirectly to staff or Trustees by any form or method.

#### C. Incoming Loan Policy

The Denver Art Museum's collections are maintained for the benefit of the public, and artworks are borrowed to support the Museum's mission and programming. Incoming loans are borrowed from institutions, galleries, and private individuals for special exhibition, display in exhibitions and rotations, research, study, conservation, gift, or purchase review.

All incoming loans (see Section VII for definitions of temporary and long-term loans) have specified loan durations with insurance and cost responsibility clearly established in advance. The curator will make a diligent effort to ensure that loans have clear and unencumbered provenances, are in good or stable condition, and have achievable storage and display requirements.

Incoming long-term loans that are not part of the special exhibition program are approved by the Director if an individual loan or group of loans from one source is less than \$25,000. Incoming long-term loans valued at more than \$25,000 must be approved by the Director, Collections Committee, and Board of Trustees.

All loans will be documented with a loan or exhibition agreement or loan receipt that must be signed by the lender of record (e.g., owner of legal title to the artwork) or lender's authorized representative. Loan documentation must specify the lender's stated valuation of the loan. In the event that a lender is unable to provide a value, the Museum may provide an acceptable, fair market value that both parties agree to in writing. Loan documentation should additionally include lender restrictions, insurance and cost responsibility, photography restrictions, if any, on public photography, reproduction permissions, and credit line information.

In recognition of the on-going insurance, storage, labor costs, and liability inherent in loans, the curators will make every effort to periodically evaluate the status of on-going long-term loans and will initiate return to lenders when their purpose and usefulness are no longer relevant.

All loans will be returned to the lender of record. It is the responsibility of the lender or lender's agent to notify the Museum in writing in event of a change of ownership or change in the address of record.

#### D. Outgoing Loan Policy

The Denver Art Museum's collections are maintained for the benefit of the public, and artworks are loaned to reach a wider audience. Artworks on loan must be given the same level of care and protection as provided by the Museum. Because of these considerations, loans are approved only to other museums, and educational and/or non-profit organizations that can maintain museum standards. Loans to non-Museum entities must be approved by the Director, who may consult with the Board of Trustees, and will be considered only if determined to be an institutional priority that accommodates tax laws and adheres to best practices for collections care.

Artworks considered for loan must be part of the Museum's Collections. All artworks considered for loan must be in stable condition to withstand rigors of the loan. Loans may be restricted based on fragility, rarity, value, use in other programs, and other management or scheduling considerations. The Museum has an obligation to ensure that artworks requested for loan receive proper care and security. Potential borrowers must provide verification of their environmental, storage, display, and security conditions and procedures for handling and transit of artworks, and must adhere to any special conditions, restrictions, or procedures required by the Museum as outlined in the loan documentation.

All loan requests should be made in writing at least six months in advance of the loan to the attention of the Director. Requests should include complete exhibition information including title and dates, description, contact, funding sources and associated publication information, venue location and any additional venue locations and dates, as well as current standard facility report(s) for the borrower and any additional venue(s). After receipt of the loan request and above information, potential borrowers should allow up to

three months for consideration, notification and, if approved, the forwarding of loan agreement documentation. The borrower will be responsible for paying all associated loan costs that include, but are not limited to: loan processing expenses; crate construction and packing costs; conservation, mount construction, matting, and framing costs; photography costs; insurance costs; and shipping, courier, and any related transportation costs.

The Chief Curator, in consultation with the Director and curator of the department in which the loan is requested, determines the overall suitability of a loan and whether the artwork will be submitted for review to the Outgoing Loan Committee. The Chief Curator or curator of specialization, will respond in writing for any loan denial as promptly as possible. All loans deemed suitable for further consideration are submitted to the Outgoing Loan Committee for evaluation.

The Outgoing Loan Committee meets bi-monthly and consists of the Chief Curator, Chief of Exhibition and Collection Services, and representatives from the Conservation and Curatorial departments, Preparation Staff, and the Registrar's Office. The Registrar's Office prepares all Committee agendas and minutes. The Committee reviews all Outgoing Loan requests, evaluates lender's stated facilities and conditions, evaluates conservation issues, evaluates scheduling considerations, determines loan restrictions and requirements, and assesses cost estimates, if relevant. The Committee makes recommendations for all Outgoing Loan approvals or denials in consultation with the Chief Curator and the Director.

The Registrar's Office will forward all appropriate loan documentation to the borrower for all approved loans, which includes a loan agreement and any specified loan restrictions or requirements for handling, shipping, couriers (**see Appendix 10: Courier Policy**), insurance, security, storage, and display. Loan documentation will include whenever possible the estimated loan preparation costs that are subject to change. Documentation will outline the specified loan period. The Museum reserves the right to recall a loan at any time should altered conditions or circumstances surrounding a loan suggest increased risk to the artwork or financial ramifications to the Museum. Recall may also occur should conditions at a lender's facility not be as stated. All requests by borrowers for loan date or venue changes will be approved by the curator upon consultation with the Outgoing Loan Committee. Loan Agreement changes and addenda will be generated and tracked by the Registrar's Office.

## E. Care of Collections

### 1. Collections Care

The Museum will hold and administer all Permanent Collections and loans in its care under conditions that meet or exceed the standards of the museum profession in long-term preservation, handling, storage, display, and security. Preventive conservation and monitored risk assessment are the management tools designed to prolong the life of museum collections. Identifying inherent instability and common agents of deterioration,

and their interactions minimizes damage to the collections. To ensure preservation, staff will follow and uphold conservation standards when determining methods and materials used in handling, storage, and packing as well as during exhibition regarding duration of display, light levels, and microclimate requirements. The day-to-day care and tracking of collections rests with the Conservation, Curatorial, and Exhibition and Collection Services departments. Staff will work in tandem to stay abreast of current museum best practices, standards, and technologies regarding collections care and disseminate them accordingly. They will ensure that procedures and training reflect this.

## 2. Storage, Handling, and Maintenance

On-site and off-site storage areas require adequate space for the orderly arrangement and safe movement of objects. Aisles in collection storage areas will maintain adequate clearance at all times. Current conservation-standard storage furniture, equipment, and materials will be utilized for all artworks in the Museum's collection storage areas.

Artwork will only be handled by trained professional personnel from the Conservation, Curatorial, and Exhibition and Collection Services departments. All personnel shall be trained and familiar with the general art handling guidelines that represent the Museum's best practices for handling, transporting, packing, and display (**See Appendix 11: Handling Guidelines—General Rules and Appendix 12: DAM Contamination Policy and Procedures**).

In accordance with museum professional standards and reflective of preventive conservation, appropriate climate (temperature and relative humidity), air filtration, and lighting are maintained within the museum and storage areas. Environmental criteria is established by the Museum's conservators and takes into account any lender requirements for incoming loans. The Museum's Protective and Facilities Services Department maintains the facility climate control and filtration systems on a regular basis. As a supplement to the Museum's electronic climate monitoring system, the Collections Management Department oversees and monitors additional PEM2 digital data-loggers which are positioned in strategic locations in collections storage areas and exhibition galleries to record the temperature and relative humidity levels. The data is downloaded from these sensors periodically and any fluctuations or environmental concerns are shared with the Protective and Facilities Services Department, the Chief of Exhibition and Collection Services, and the Director of Conservation.

The Museum is committed to Integrated Pest Management (IPM) (**See Appendix 13: Integrated Pest Management Guidelines**). IPM philosophy strives for a no-food policy in the galleries and storage areas and seeks to eliminate or reduce biological damage caused by insects and other museum pests through the least toxic methods, thus not compromising the integrity of the collections or human safety. IPM involves proper collections care and modification of human behavior. Records of pest monitoring and treatments, as well as housekeeping schedules and activities, will be maintained by the Exhibition and Collection Services Department.



Gallery and storage areas are maintained at a high level of cleanliness through preventive conservation and IPM programs. Gallery and collections storage maintenance embodies all of the activities of monitoring and cleaning spaces where collections are exhibited, processed, and stored. Guided by the Conservation Department, members of the Collections Management Department perform all activities pertaining to proper gallery and collections storage maintenance including management, monitoring the environment with PEM2 dataloggers, inspecting, dusting, and vacuuming (**see Appendix 14: Gallery and Collections Storage Maintenance Guidelines**).

#### F. Collections Access and Use

Access and use of the collections on and off-site must comply with the museum mission, support continuing scholarly investigation and research, be ethical and legal, respect the integrity of the collections for broadening the Museum's collections documentation, and contribute to the academic and public discourses.

The Museum strives to make its collections accessible to the public through loans, display and exhibitions, limited access to collections in storage, and digital access through the Museum's online collection.

The Curatorial departments are responsible for vetting requests and monitoring access to the physical collections. Collections shall be accessible for legitimate research and study by pre-approved scholars and members of the community as allowed by donor restrictions, artwork stability, and available staffing, resources, and funding. Researchers must provide a written statement of their research objectives and why their project requires use of the collections. (**See Appendix 15: DAM Research Request Cover Letter, DAM Study Collection Policy, and DAM Application to Study Collections**).

Appointments to view art must be requested a minimum of two weeks prior to the desired date. The collections and/or records are accessible only during normal business hours. Certain works may not be available for viewing due to conservation concerns, portability, security, cultural sensitivity, and exhibition schedules. Access is subject to availability of the appropriate Curatorial, Conservation, or Collections Management personnel.

Security measures must be in place for access to mitigate risk on safeguarding collections. Tours and classes are subject to approval and limited to ten members at a time. In no case shall access be allowed to the collections in the absence of the Director, Curatorial, Conservation or Collections Management personnel. Unsupervised visitors to the collection storage areas are not permitted (**See Appendix 16: On-site and Off-site Collections Storage Access Guidelines**).

## G. Documentation of Collections

### 1. Documentation Responsibilities

The Museum acknowledges that the collection records and their management, both on an institutional scale and down to very detailed recording elements, are a significant component of collections care. It is the policy of the Museum to maintain accurate, timely, secure, and complete records that are physically protected. The Museum shall maintain established systems for preservation of the data on collections that include the timely and accurate cataloguing of artworks; a centralized electronic Collections Management System encompassing complete collection information with appropriate backup archiving; accession files; conservation records; documentation on the history of use; results of research; movement and location changes; changes in the record; photographic and digital images; and many other levels of documentation.

In accordance with the documentation requirements and standards, collection records shall be maintained by the Curatorial, Exhibition and Collection Services, and Conservation departments.

The Registrar's Office will oversee documentation relating to the legal status of all artworks in the collection or on loan and information on the artwork's movements and care while under the control of the Museum. All record systems shall refer to artworks by a unique Museum number (for example, accession number or loan number) and will provide for easy retrieval of artwork information as well as current artwork location. Documentation will include a descriptive catalog record, the prior history of ownership of each artwork, and all activity of the artwork (e.g., loan, exhibit, conservation, deaccession). Records of artworks on loan to the Museum should reflect all activity of the artworks while under the control of the Museum.

Curatorial departments shall maintain the basic catalog information on artworks in the collections and a broad body of documentation that establishes the artwork's proper place and importance within its scholarly, cultural or scientific sphere, and additional exhibition, publication, and research information relating to the artworks.

The Conservation Department should primarily document the activities and decisions regarding the care and treatment of the collections, including the techniques used in the repair and maintenance of the collections. Conservation will maintain records of conservation proposals and treatments, permissions, sampling and testing information, and other related documentation. Signed treatment proposals, treatment reports, and photo documentation of treatments will be integrated into the archival file for the object maintained by the Registrar's Office or attached to the unique object record in the Collections Management System.

## 2. Conservation and Condition Documentation

Conservation and condition documentation are integral to the legacy of an object. Documentation consists of written and photographic records that describe or illustrate the condition of an object and inform a treatment proposal. The Conservation Department maintains written and photographic records related to conservation activities. The information is shared with the Registrar's Office and Curatorial departments through the Museum's Collection Management System. The Registrar's Office is responsible for highly detailed condition reports of incoming and outgoing loans, as well as new acquisitions.

Conservation assessment related to stability of new acquisitions, treatment, and ongoing maintenance of collection objects is the responsibility of the Conservation Department working in conjunction with the appropriate Curatorial Department. All staff conservators will follow the AIC Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice. Conservators retained on contract will adhere to established museum guidelines (**See Appendix 17: Working with Conservation Contractors and Temporary On-Call Staff**). Documentation of variable and electronic media requires collaboration among numerous departments. The procedures are articulated in **Appendix 24: Variable and Electronic Media: Collections and Loans Policies**.

Technical analysis may be undertaken to provide information regarding process, manufacture, prior restorations, authenticity, and or deterioration (**See Appendix 18: DAM Technical Analysis Guidelines**). Assessment, historic and technological aspects, proposals, and technical analysis are discussed and agreed upon by the Conservator and curator of specialization prior to undertaking action. The succeeding treatment report describes processes and materials employed in the course of analysis and conservation treatment.

## 3. Access to Records

Access to the collections records should be given at the discretion of the departments maintaining collection records, and only with the permission of the appropriate Curatorial Department or the Registrar's Office. Under no circumstances can loan or lender information be released without the permission of the Curatorial Department. Although some material from the files or the Collections Management System is open to the public, many documents contain sensitive information that should not be released. Hard files maintained by the Registrar's Office containing original forms and legal documents may not be removed from the records room for any reason. Temporary removal of curatorial files will be at the discretion of the Curatorial Department.

## 4. Records Modification

Electronic collections records or paper files may be updated by the Curatorial or the Exhibition and Collection Services departments. These changes will be noted in the Collections Management System and in the paper files.

## H. Inventory Policy

The Museum maintains several collection identification systems including physical numbering, tagging, and barcoding that support best practices and greater accuracy and accountability around collections movement and inventory activities. By conducting inventories, the Museum better fulfills its legal and ethical responsibilities for safeguarding collections both on-site and off-site. A current, reconciled inventory of the collections is the primary tool for maintaining accountability and providing access to the collections. A regular, periodic comparison between the collection management system and the physical collections is necessary for prudent collections management. All artworks in the Museum's collections and on loan are subject to inventory.

A regular inventory program will be implemented by the Collections Management Department in collaboration with other Exhibition and Collection Services departments. The Registrars Office is responsible for managing inventory of works out on loan. Collections held under oversight of the Learning and Engagement Department (Education Collection) and the Library are subject to independent tracking and inventory guidelines overseen by those Departments.

The Museum's inventory program will include spot, project, sectional, and temporary storage inventories that are conducted on regular timeframes with reporting and reconciliation requirements, including resolution of location discrepancies as outlined in the Museum's Inventory Management and Control Procedures. (See **Appendix 19: Inventory Management and Control Procedures**)

## I. Security and Risk Management

The Museum strives to maintain a secure environment for every artwork in its collections. It is the responsibility of the Curatorial, Exhibition and Collection Services, Conservation, and Protective and Facilities Services Departments to ensure that artworks are protected from natural disasters, theft, human error, mechanical or operational failure, and deterioration. The Museum staff will maintain, periodically update, and ensure staff is fully trained on incident and damage notification and response procedures (see **Appendix 20: Incident and Damage Notification Response**) and emergency preparedness policies and procedures. The Protective Services Department oversees the Museum-wide Emergency Response policies and procedures and the Exhibition and Collection Services and Conservation departments oversee the Collections-related emergency response policies and procedures (See **Appendix 21: Collections Emergency Management Plan**). Training on the procedures is conducted annually.

The City and County of Denver Risk Management Office purchases and maintains a fine-arts insurance policy with standard exclusions and blanket coverage limits for the Denver Art Museum collections. The Museum is a named insured under the policy and is one of multiple cultural agencies in the City of Denver covered under the fine-arts policy. The policy is managed by a fine-arts broker chosen by the City and renewed annually.

Blanket coverage and deductible limits may change from year to year. The policy covers artwork located on the premises of the Denver Art Museum, on surrounding plazas, in designated off-site storage locations, and in other scheduled locations.

The policy covers artworks belonging to the Denver Art Museum as well as works on loan to the Museum. For high-value exhibitions with loans coming from domestic or international lenders, the Museum may choose to secure an individual commercial short-term special exhibition policy or coverage through the Art and Artifacts Indemnity Program administered through the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities. Individual lenders may choose to maintain their own insurance coverage for transit, premises, or both. The Registrar's Office will negotiate such terms with Lenders and request appropriate documentation, including certificates of insurance, policy information, and a listing of exclusions and limits of liability as deemed necessary to protect the Museum's interests.

Information on the Museum's insurance policy can be secured through the Registrar's Office, Accounting Office, or directly through the City and County of Denver Risk Management Office.

The Registrar's Office oversees implementation of the fine-arts coverage as it applies to Museum collections and loans, issues or reviews certificates of insurance per approval of the City and County of Denver and fine-arts broker, and provides information to the City and County of Denver Risk Management Office for the annual insurance renewal. The Registrar's Office administers all fine-art insurance claims through the City and County of Denver Risk Management Office. Decisions to process a claim are made in concert with the Chief of Exhibition and Collection Services, the Chief Financial Officer, and the Museum Director.

#### J. Rights and Reproductions Policy

The Denver Art Museum's collections are maintained for the benefit of the public, and permission is granted for reproduction in publications to reach a wider audience and contribute to the larger scholarly community. When images of artworks in the Denver Art Museum's collections are reproduced, they should be the best possible representation of the artwork itself. In order to ensure this level of quality, requests for permissions from outside the Museum are routed and approved through the Rights and Reproductions staff in the Registrar's Office. All requests to reproduce images must also be approved by the appropriate Curatorial Department. This process allows for quality assurance for the image itself as well as appropriate permissions pertaining to copyright of the artwork and the image.

Images considered for reproduction must be the property of the Museum and accessioned into the collections or be a part of a special collection held by the Museum with approval to reproduce from the appropriate parties. All requests for reproduction must be in reference to existing images held by Photographic Services. In cases where photographic

images do not exist, the cost of art handling and photography will fall upon the requesting party.

The Museum has an obligation to ensure that all images reproduced from its collection are published in accordance with current copyright law to protect itself, its donors, and the artists represented in the collections from misrepresentation. Potential publishers must provide detailed information about the nature of the use of the image and seek appropriate permissions from third parties as necessary in accordance with the conditions outlined in the Application for Permission to Publish (see **Appendix 22: Rights and Reproduction Handbook**).

#### V. Staff Responsibilities and Ethics Policy Relating to Collections Oversight

The Denver Art Museum's Collections are held in public trust on behalf of the citizens of Colorado. The Museum's Board of Trustees, Collections Committee, and staff charged with oversight of the collections shall aspire to the highest standards of professionalism and transparency in fulfilling the institutional mission and fiduciary obligations.

The Denver Art Museum endorses the American Association of Art Museum Directors' and the American Alliance of Museum's codes of ethics. It is unprofessional for Museum staff to use their influence or position in the art world for personal gain or to misuse the Denver Art Museum's name, reputation, resources, or services. The Denver Art Museum's Board of Trustees, Collections Committee, and museum staff will follow the internal Museum policies regarding ethics and conflicts of interest (**See Appendix 23: DAM Conflict of Interest Policy**). Members should not participate in assessments or decisions or utilize collections, staff, facilities, or resources in ways that would reasonably appear to give a material benefit to themselves, their families or associates. Staff members shall not traffic in artworks for monetary reasons, nor be party to the recommendation of artworks for purchase by museums or collectors which they have any undisclosed financial interest; nor shall they accept any commission or gift from any seller or buyer of artworks (See Appendix 23: DAM Conflict of Interest). If a Board, Committee, or staff member is a collector, he/she shall exercise extraordinary discretion between his/her personal interests in a work of art and the concerns of the Denver Art Museum and shall disclose such in accordance with the Museum's Conflict of Interest Policy.

In accordance with tax laws and IRS regulations, the Denver Art Museum's staff will not provide donors or members of the public with artwork appraisals. The IRS requires professional, independent appraisals from donors as required for completing tax forms. The Museum will not pay for a donor's appraisal fees or reimburse a donor for appraisal costs. The Museum's staff will not endorse individual appraisers but can provide a list of appraisers and sources of further research for donors upon request.

Staff members may assist owners of artworks in identifying, and assessing the aesthetic quality, condition, attribution, and scholarly context of their artworks. Oral communication of such information may be provided freely, but should note that it

expresses an individual opinion and is in no way guaranteed. All written statements must be accompanied by a disclaimer absolving the staff member and the Denver Art Museum of any legal or financial responsibility should the stated opinion subsequently prove inaccurate (See **Appendix 25: Artwork Identification Disclaimer**). Such assistance will be provided without monetary or other compensation to staff members.

Unless otherwise required by law, Denver Art Museum's Board of Trustees, Collections Committee, and staff must not disclose to unauthorized parties any confidential information to which they have access. Such information may include, but is not limited to, valuation of art and lender, benefactor, or personnel information.

#### VI. Monitoring and Revising the Collections Management Policy and Procedures

The Collections Management Policies shall be reviewed by the Chief of Exhibition and Collection Services and the Chief Curator every five years. Any additions, deletions, or revisions shall be proposed to the Director and presented to the Collections Committee and Board of Trustees for approval before being incorporated into the Collections Management Policy.

Collections Management Procedures shall be reviewed by relevant Conservation, Curatorial, and Exhibition and Collection Services departments and updated annually. All additions, deletions, or revisions shall be proposed to the Chief of Exhibition and Collection Services and the Chief Curator for approval before being incorporated into the Collections Management Procedures.

#### VII. Definitions

**Abandoned Property:** Any loaned artwork that has been documented by the Museum as fulfilling the necessary requirements under *Colorado Statutes, Title 38 Property – Real and Personal/Loaned Property, Article 14 ‘Loans to Museums’, paragraphs 38-14-101 – 38-14-112* whereby: 7 years have passed without written contact between the Museum and the lender and the lender's identity or current address is unknown to the Museum; or, more than 120 days have passed since the Museum gave written notice of termination of a loan and the lender has not reclaimed the loaned property. An abandoned artwork that falls under the above statute provisions may be accessioned or removed if not appropriate to the Museum's collections or mission. (See **Appendix 7: Abandoned Property Procedures**)

**Accessioning:** The formal process used to accept and record an artwork into the collections that gives the Museum legal title and commits the Museum to the responsibility for proper care and use as defined by its collections policies.

**Apparatus (Education) Collection:** A collection status given to artworks that are generally lower quality and not deemed worthy of Permanent Collection status but are retained for use as an exhibition prop or for educational purposes. This material may be stored and cared for by the Curatorial or Learning and Engagement departments and may

not be accorded the same standards for care, storage, conservation, inventory, insurance, or oversight.

**Apparatus (AP) removal:** The process used to remove permanently an artwork that has been accepted into the Apparatus Collection.

**Bequest:** The act of giving or leaving personal property (e.g. artwork) by a will or estate.

**Deaccession:** The process used to remove permanently an artwork that has been accepted into the Permanent Collection.

**Exchange:** The process by which a deaccessioned artwork is exchanged for another artwork that is accessioned into the collections. In both cases, legal title transfers to the recipient.

**Found in Collection (FIC):** A collection status given to artworks that have been stored with the collection for a significant period of time and lack any significant documentation as to how they were acquired by the Museum.

**Fractional Gift:** Partial ownership of an artwork with intent from the donor to gift the remaining portion over time.

**Gift:** A donated artwork accepted into the collections.

**Incoming loan:** An artwork not owned by the Museum that is left in the temporary custody of the museum.

**Long-term Loan:** An artwork loaned to the Museum for period of 6 months or more usually for purposes of research, study and examination, conservation, storage, or long-term display in the Permanent Collection galleries.

**Non-Accessioned Collection:** A collection status given to artworks that are not relevant to the Museum's stated collecting mission and may be used for unrelated use such as future sale or exchange. Acceptance of a Non-Accessioned Collection artwork must include a plan for use or future disposition. The Museum will inform all donors of artworks designated into this collection at the time of donation if the intention is to dispose by sale within a three-year period of donation, as this may have tax consequences for the donor.

**Non-Accessioned Collection (NAC) removal:** The process used to remove permanently an artwork that has been accepted into the Non-Accessioned Collection.

**Outgoing Loan:** Temporary physical transfer of an artwork from the collection of the Denver Art Museum to another museum, institution, or entity for purposes that include exhibition, conservation, or research.



**Permanent Collection:** Permanent Collection is a collection status given to artworks that are considered related use as defined by the Museum’s collecting mission. Permanent Collection artworks are given the highest professional standards of care, storage, conservation, inventory, insurance, documentation, and oversight.

**Promised Gift:** An offer of a future donation of an artwork documented by a pledge letter or agreement.

**Purchase:** An artwork purchased and accepted into the collections.

**Restricted Gift:** An artwork given to the Museum with a restriction (e.g., must be exhibited or retained in perpetuity). Rarely does the Museum accept a gift with restriction.

**Special Exhibition Loan:** An artwork loaned to the Museum for purposes of a special exhibition that may involve the Museum’s loan oversight to other venues.

**Temporary Loan:** An artwork loaned to the Museum for a period of six months or less for purposes usually involving proposed gift, proposed purchase, proposed long-term loan, short-term display, storage, research, study and examination, or conservation.

## VIII. Appendices

- Appendix 1: Vision 2021
- Appendix 2: Collection Plans
- Appendix 3: NAGPRA Collections Policy
- Appendix 4: Nazi-era Collections Policy
- Appendix 5: Auction Bid Approval Form
- Appendix 6: Pledged Gift Agreement
- Appendix 7: Abandoned Property Procedures
- Appendix 8: Credit Line Guidelines
- Appendix 9: Decession and NAC-removal Guidelines
- Appendix 10: Courier Policy
- Appendix 11: Handling Guidelines—General Rules
- Appendix 12: Contamination Policy and Procedures
- Appendix 13 Integrated Pest Management Guidelines
- Appendix 14: Gallery and Collections Storage Maintenance Guidelines).
- Appendix 15: Policy regarding Study of Collections
- Appendix 16: On-site and Off-site Collection Storage Access Procedures
- Appendix 17 Working with Conservation Contractors and Temporary On-call Staff Policy
- Appendix 18: Technical Analysis of DAM Collections Guidelines
- Appendix 19: Inventory Management and Control Procedures

Appendix 20 Incident and Damage Notification Procedures  
Appendix 21 Collections Emergency Response Plan  
Appendix 22: Rights and Reproduction Handbook  
Appendix 23: Conflict of Interest Policy  
Appendix 24: Variable and Electronic Media: Collections and Loans Policies  
Appendix 25: Artwork Identification Disclaimer