

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF MEXICAN ART PERMANENT COLLECTION POLICY

Purpose

The goals of the National Museum of Mexican Art (NMMA) in operating its Museum are to collect, preserve, study, interpret, and exhibit significant materials relating to Mexican art and culture as it manifests itself in and outside of Mexico; and to provide related educational services for the purpose of increasing and enriching public knowledge. The acts of acquisition, accession and deaccession shall reflect these stated purposes.

Collecting Objective

To build upon the strengths of the present collection of objects: Arte Popular / Folk Art, Carlos Cortez Archive, Digital Media, Drawings, Ephemera / Memorabilia, Installations, Paintings / Mixed Media, Photography, Posters, pre-Cuauhtémoc, Prints, Sculpture, and Textiles / Outfits by artists of Mexico and of Mexican ancestry.

Acquisition Policy

Definition: For the purpose of this policy, acquisition is defined as the discovery, preliminary evaluation, taking physical and legal custody of, and acknowledging receipt of materials and objects.

Acquisition Criteria

Museum objects must meet all of the following tests of acquisition before being acquired by the NMMA.

- 1. The objects must be relevant to and consistent with the purposes and activities of the NMMA.**
- 2. The NMMA can provide for the storage, protection and preservation of the objects under conditions that insure availability for museum purposes and in keeping with professionally accepted standards.**
- 3. Items will have permanency in the collections as long as they retain their physical integrity, their identity, and their authenticity, and/or as long as they remain useful for the purposes of the NMMA.**
- 4. The materials or objects must be documented as to provenance.**

5. All legal, and ethical implications of the acquisition must have been considered.

6. All donations of materials are considered outright and unconditional gifts to be used at the discretion of the NMMA. Title to all objects acquired shall be free and clear, without restriction to use or future disposition.

Means of Acquisition

Materials and objects may be acquired by purchase, commission, bequest, gift, exchange, field collection, and/or abandonment. No materials or objects shall be knowingly or willfully accepted or acquired which are known to have been illegally collected contrary to state law, regulation, treaty, and/or convention.

The NMMA subscribes to the provisions of the UNESCO Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, The Hague, 1954; UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, 1970, Paris; ICOM Ethics of Acquisition, 1970, Paris; and AAM Code of Ethics for Museums, 1994, Washington D.C. The NMMA shall refuse to acquire materials and objects where there is cause to believe that the circumstances of their collection involved needless destruction of historic sites, buildings, structures, habitats, districts, and objects. The NMMA will abide by the UNESCO Convention of 11/17/1970.

Acquisitions Procedure

Authority to acquire museum objects is delegated to the Permanent Collection Committee (which must include the Permanent Collection Curator, Visual Arts Director, President, Associate Curator, and board representation within the confines of the Permanent Collection Policy. The Board Representative and any other representative are appointed by the President. For the purpose of purchase, authorization to acquire objects with a value of less than \$250 is delegated to the Permanent Collection Curator and Visual Arts Director. Museum acquisitions shall be made within annual budgets approved by the Board of Directors. The purchase of objects having a value of \$250 or more shall be approved formally by the Board of Directors prior to acceptance or purchases.

No staff member may obligate the NMMA to the acceptance of any material or object not consonant with the intent or spirit of the Acquisitions Policy. No staff member shall offer appraisals of the monetary value of library and archival materials or objects to donor or reveal the NMMA's insurance value, for the purpose of establishing a fair market value of gifts offered to the NMMA. Donors desiring to take an income tax gift deduction must obtain an independent appraisal from an authorized appraiser. Records of such appraisals will be kept by the NMMA in perpetuity. Staff members will not appraise or otherwise place a

monetary value on library and archive materials or on objects casually brought to the NMMA.

As a public service, staff may attempt to attribute, identify, or authenticate items brought to the NMMA by the public. Such attributions, identifications and/or authentications shall be for the sole use of that individual.

All objects or materials deposited with the NMMA for these purposes shall have identification and be covered by insurance by the owner. Such objects are not to be deposited on NMMA premises longer than thirty days. The NMMA accepts no responsibility for notification of individuals for the return of such deposits. Items not claimed within sixty days of deposit are considered abandoned property and as such are subject to state law pertaining to the same. Abandoned property of negligible value may be disposed of by the Permanent Collection Curator. Property of greater than negligible value may be disposed of under law by the Permanent Collection Committee.

Accessioning

Definition: Accessioning is defined as the process of accepting items into the Permanent Collection of the NMMA. All materials and objects shall be processed under procedures and policies adopted by the Board of Directors.

A. All museum objects shall be assigned accession numbers and shall be indexed by category, date of acquisition, and by name with suitable cross reference.

B. Permanent Collection records, including source, location, subject, as well as accession files and accession computer records shall be kept in accordance with accepted professional standards. Duplicate copies of records will be kept in a safe place off site.

C. Materials shall be stored in a manner to provide optimum security, accessibility and preservation.

D. Materials in need of restoration shall be restored as soon as possible.

E. Restoration shall be performed only by qualified professionals using approved techniques and substances.

F. Materials, whether in use or in storage, shall be protected from life shortening forces such as excessive heat, cold, humidity, dryness, dust, ultra-violet light, insects, vermin or improper handling.

G. Gift Agreements shall be made for all property received. A letter of thanks to the donor with a copy of the Gift Agreement will serve as the official receipt for the

donor's purposes. The Gift Agreement will set forth an adequate description of the objects involved and the conditions of transfer (see Gift Agreement).

Deaccessioning

Definition: Deaccessioning is the process of removing permanently from the Permanent Collection accessioned museum objects. The deaccession process shall be cautious, delicate, and scrupulous.

1. The material or object is outside the scope of the purpose of the NMMA and its Permanent Collection Policy.
2. The material or object is irrelevant to the purposes of the NMMA.
3. The material or object lacks physical integrity.
4. The material or object has failed to retain its identity or authenticity, or has been lost or stolen and remains lost for longer than two years.
5. The material or object is duplicate and without intrinsic value.
6. The NMMA is unable to preserve it properly.
7. The material or object is deteriorated beyond usefulness.
8. The material or object has doubtful potential utilization in the foreseeable future, or has accidentally been accessioned twice.

Deaccession Procedure

A. Materials shall be deaccessioned only upon the recommendation in writing of the Permanent Collection Committee and upon the approval of a majority of the Board of Directors present at a regular or special meeting. The minutes shall reflect the decision.

B. If the accessioned material or object was purchased by the NMMA, it may be disposed of in whatever manner the Permanent Collection Committee and Board of Directors deem appropriate and most beneficial to the institution. It may be sold by bid, traded, offered at public auction, given outright or discarded.

C. If the deaccessioned material was donated to the NMMA, consideration will first be given to placing the object, through gift, exchange, or sale, in another tax exempt educational institution. Deaccessioned objects not disposed of in this manner normally will be sold at advertised public markets and only in a manner that will protect the interests, objectives and legal status of the institution.

D. The NMMA does not sanction the sale or gift of deaccessioned objects to its employees, directors, or to their representatives.

E. Funds received from the sale of deaccessioned objects from the Permanent Collection will be used only to acquire other items for the Permanent Collection.

Disposition of Non-Accessioned Materials

Definition: Non-accessioned materials are those items donated to the NMMA which do not (1) fall within the Permanent Collection Policy guidelines, (2) are part of an acquired Collection but have little or no value either monetary or aesthetical, (3) are not worthy either by their physical state or nature to be accessioned as part of the Permanent Collection.

A. A list of non-accessioned materials or objects will be kept in the permanent files.

B. Recommendation for non-accession of materials will be made by the Permanent Collection Committee.

C. Disposal, under the direction of the Permanent Collection Committee, of non-accessioned materials may be: (1) given by gift or exchange to another tax exempt educational institution, (2) put out for sale with funds accruing to the benefit of the Permanent Collection, (3) used as study pieces, (4) destroyed.

The NMMA does not sanction the sale or gift of non-accessioned items valued over \$250 to its employees, Directors, or to their representatives.

Loans

A. Loans from the NMMA Permanent Collection

Books, periodicals, catalogues and manuscripts owned by the NMMA may not be taken from the premises of the NMMA for any reason, except with the approval by the Education Director and in accordance with Library Policy.

Works from the Museum's Permanent Collection may be loaned to museums and institutions under either of the following two plans.

1. The Permanent Collection Curator may approve an exhibit, or temporary loan, of NMMA property for a period not to exceed ninety days unless otherwise specified in exhibition contract. At the end of ninety days a privilege of renewal shall be executed if the Permanent Collection Curator so recommends.

2. The Board of Directors may approve a loan of NMMA property on such terms as determined by the Board. Insurance provisions shall be determined by the Board.

The Permanent Collection Curator shall maintain a record and systematic follow up of NMMA Permanent Collection items on loan, and suitable notations shall be made on the inventory of the holdings. A "Loan Agreement" deemed suitable by the Permanent Collection Curator must be signed by the borrower and the NMMA.

B. Loans to the NMMA

The NMMA will accept loaned items usually for a period of no more than six months, during which time the NMMA provides insurance coverage unless the lender elects to maintain his own coverage. Beyond six months or specified loan period, special arrangements may be made for a long term loan with written consent of the owner who will carry sufficient insurance on the items(s). Such loans will be renewed in writing annually. If an item is left over one year without contact or written renewal from the owner or his heirs for the return of the item(s), the NMMA will consider the item(s) abandoned and will accession the item(s) into the Permanent Collection or dispose of it according to the Non-Accession Policy.

Access to the Permanent Collection

The NMMA believes the Permanent Collection should be used to advance knowledge and therefore will make it accessible to serious students and scholars for research. A primary consideration of availability of items for examination and use will be based upon the condition of the item(s) and availability of other sources, copies or information. Access to the Permanent Collection is secondary to preservation of the Permanent Collection.

Procedures for access to the Permanent Collection will be:

- 1. A written request (see Request Form) by the person(s) stating the (a) purpose for access and anticipated use of their research, (b) need for access.**
- 2. Authorization for access will be given/or denied by the NMMA's Permanent Collection Curator. Denial(s) may be appealed to the Board of Directors.**
- 3. Persons wishing to use objects or archival materials for profit making ventures must (a) adhere to all copyright designations; (b) enter into a licensing agreement with the NMMA and/or artist.**
- 4. No item from the Permanent Collection may be removed from the premises without the Permanent Collection Curator's authorization and in accordance with the then existing Loan Policy.**

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