

Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

Collections Management Policy

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose

This Collections Management Policy (the “Policy”) is intended to document the basic principles that guide the development, integrity and care of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco’s (the “Museums”) permanent collection and loaned artworks in accordance with its mission and with professional museum standards. Through this Policy, the Museums ensure that the acquisition, deaccession, exhibition, care, and loan of artworks within the permanent collection are conducted in a manner that adheres to the Museums’ mission, complies with applicable law, and reflects the highest ethical standards.

B. Institutional Overview

The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, a charitable trust department of the City and County of San Francisco, is the largest public arts institution in Northern California. The Museums’ mission is to connect our visitors with local and global art in order to promote their knowledge of and curiosity about the past, deepen their engagement with the art and ideas of today, and stimulate their creative agency in their own futures (*adopted December 8, 2020*).

The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco was established in 1972 when an amendment to the city charter joined the de Young Museum and Legion of Honor under one governance structure. While the museums now operate as one entity, each has its own distinct history and curatorial focus:

The de Young Museum: Originating from the 1894 California Midwinter International Exposition in Golden Gate Park, the M.H. de Young Museum is now housed in a copper-clad landmark building designed by Herzog & de Meuron that opened in 2005. Reflecting an active conversation among cultures, perspectives, and time periods, the collections housed at the de Young include American painting, sculpture, and decorative arts from the 17th to the 21st centuries; arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas; costume and textile arts; and international modern and contemporary art.

The Legion of Honor: Modeled after the neoclassical Palais de la Légion d’Honneur in Paris and designed by George Applegarth, the California Palace of the Legion of Honor opened in 1924 on a bluff in Lincoln Park overlooking the Golden Gate. It offers unique insight into the art historical, political, and social movements of the previous 6,000 years of human history, with holdings including ancient art from the Mediterranean basin; European painting, sculpture, and decorative arts; and the largest collection of works on paper in the American West.

C. Collections Scope

The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco has a permanent collection of approximately 150,000 artworks that illuminate 6,000 years of artistic expression across the globe. Most of the collection is held in public trust by the City of San Francisco, with a small number of artworks held by the Fine Arts Museums Foundation.

II. COLLECTIONS GOVERNANCE

A. Boards of Trustees

The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco is governed by three separate Boards, which each have distinct roles and responsibilities related to the Museums' collection.

- **Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (FAMSF):** A Charitable Trust Department of the City and County of San Francisco. The Board is responsible for the protection and conservation of the assets of the Fine Arts Museums, including the art collection.
- **Fine Arts Museums Foundation (FAMF):** A private 501(c)3 organization that holds the Museums' endowment funds, including acquisition funds. The Acquisitions Committee is a committee of the Foundation.
- **Corporation of the Fine Arts Museums (COFAM):** A private 501(c)3 organization that raises funds for and manages most of the day-to-day operations of the Museums.

B. Acquisitions Committee

The Acquisitions Committee is a standing committee of the Fine Arts Museums Foundation (FAMF). With the Museum Director, the Acquisitions Committee is responsible for recommending to the FAMF and FAMSF Boards all acquisitions and deaccessions, as well as any changes to the Collections Management Policy.

The Committee consists of at least fifteen members, a majority of whom shall be Trustees of FAMSF, FAMF, or COFAM. A quorum of one-third of the members is necessary to hold a meeting, and a majority vote of members present at a meeting is required to approve a motion. The President of the FAMF Board, in consultation with the FAMSF Board President, appoints the Committee to one-year terms and designates one trustee member to serve as the Chair.

C. Director and CEO

The Museum Director (the "Director") who is jointly employed by the City as the Fine Arts Museums Department Head and by COFAM as Director and CEO, has overall responsibility for the management of the collections, subject to applicable Board approvals.

In the absence of the Director (or Acting Director), the most senior member of the Art Division (Chief of Staff and Strategy) shall have the authority to approve acquisitions and deaccessions,

and the most senior member of the Exhibitions and Collections Division (Chief of Exhibitions and Collections) shall have the authority to approve loans, within the Director's established limits.

D. Professional Staff

The Museums' professional staff is guided in its work related to collections and loans by this Policy. The responsibility for the study, preservation, physical care, risk management, and documentation of the collections and loans lies with the appropriate staff in both the Art Division and the Exhibitions and Collections Management Division, as well as with staff in Visitor Services, Security, Facilities, and other departments across the organization.

III. ACQUISITIONS

A. General Principles

1. Types of Acquisitions

Acquisitions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Purchases
- Gifts
- Promised Gifts
- Bequests
- Commissions

2. Criteria for Acquisitions

Acquisitions are proposed on the recommendation of the applicable Curator, with the approval of the Director. All collecting must follow the highest standards of ethical, legal, and professional practice. General criteria for acquisitions should include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The quality and historical significance of a work of art
- Its capacity to enhance or augment a particular collecting area
- Its physical condition and appropriateness for display
- Its significance to one or more of the Museums' audiences in alignment with Museums strategy and priorities
- Its price relative to current market values
- The institution's fiscal, physical, and staffing capacity to store and care properly for the artwork

The Museums may decline a gift or bequest, partially or completely for any reason, including but not limited to concerns about provenance, the costs of its display and installation, transportation, storage, maintenance, or conservation.

3. Research and Due Diligence

Curators are responsible for rigorously researching the authenticity and the provenance of an artwork prior to acquisition to ensure to the greatest extent possible the Museums' right to legal ownership of the artwork and compliance with legal and ethical standards adopted by the Museums and outlined in this Policy. Due diligence encompasses, but is

not limited to, compiling and vetting as much written documentation as possible about the artwork related to its ownership history, sale or auction records, purchase receipts, publication history, and exhibition history. Given the breadth and depth of the Museums' collecting areas, Curators will abide by their respective field's best practices and professional standards for provenance research or inquiry.

Curators are responsible for addressing significant gaps in ownership history by consulting such databases as the Art Loss Register and the Getty Provenance Index, and/or seeking legal counsel from the City Attorney. Should any gaps or other material issues be identified, it is the responsibility of the Director to make a determination as to whether to proceed with the acquisition.

4. Condition Assessment

Before being presented to the Acquisitions Committee, the proposed artwork should be evaluated onsite by Conservators and recommended for acquisition, unless otherwise approved by the Director.

B. Acquisitions Procedures

1. Acquisition Approval Process

The Acquisition approval process involves several steps and stakeholders, as outlined below.

a) Curatorial Proposal

Acquisitions are proposed to the Acquisitions Committee on the recommendation of the applicable Curator, with the approval of the Director. For each proposed acquisition, the curatorial recommendation should include the object's attribution, condition, provenance, exhibition history, publication history, price, funding source(s), and relevance to the collection.

b) Acquisitions Committee

The Acquisitions Committee convenes to review curatorial proposals and make recommendations for acquisitions to be formally approved by the Museum.

c) FAMF Board

The FAMF Board reviews and approves or disapproves the recommendations of the Acquisitions Committee and approves or disapproves the release of funds from the Foundation for any purchases, as appropriate.

d) FAMSF Board

The FAMSF Board of Trustees, or its Executive Committee, formally votes to accept the newly-acquired works into the FAMSF collection. Upon approval by the FAMSF Board, acquisitions are immediately transferred from the FAMF to FAMSF and accessioned into the FAMSF collection.

2. Acquisition by Purchase

a) Object Purchase by Discretion (Funded Purchases)

A Curator, on approval of the Director, may purchase works of art with a value of \$50,000 or less for each object out of the acquisitions funds restricted to that department, provided that the aggregate sum spent by any individual curatorial department between Acquisitions Committee meetings is \$125,000 or less. These purchases will be reported to the Acquisitions Committee at its next meeting.

b) Bidding at Auction Between Meetings

For a purchase at auction that may exceed \$50,000, a Curator may seek the approval of the Director of Museums and Acquisitions Committee Chair to bid at auction between committee meetings, not to exceed an agreed-upon dollar amount and funding source. These purchases will be reported to the Acquisitions Committee at its next meeting.

c) Accounting of Acquisition Funds

The FAMF Fiscal Officer shall keep the Acquisitions Committee informed of the status of acquisition funds expended, encumbered (including underwater funds), and remaining for each fund, documented in an updated written report submitted to the Committee, Board, and staff in advance of each meeting.

4. Acceptance of Gifts

a) Governance

Per Charter Section 5.100 and San Francisco Administrative Code Sec 2A.155.3, The Board of Trustees of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (FAMSF) is authorized to accept gifts, devises and bequests to the Museums without Board of Supervisor approval when the acceptance of the same entails no expense on the part of the Board beyond the ordinary care and maintenance of such objects of art or other articles.

b) Unrestricted Gifts

Ordinarily, gifts shall be accepted without restrictions, which should be stated in letters of acceptance.

c) Gifts with Restrictions

If, under special circumstances, an exception is made to accept an acquisition with restrictions, it should be analyzed with the long-term interest of the organization in mind. Any restriction must be approved by the Museums' Director and presented in writing to the Acquisitions Committee.

d) Promised Gifts

The offer of a Promised Gift will be presented to the Acquisitions Committee for recommendation to FAMF prior to signing of a Promised Gift agreement. Any restriction in the Promised Gift Pledge must be presented in writing and approved by the Acquisitions Committee. Promised Gifts will be transferred to FAMSF from FAMF when the Museum takes physical custody of the artwork to complete the acceptance of the gift. The Museum will not be responsible for insuring any works of art not in the Museums' physical custody.

e) Year End Gifts

The Director of Museums or their designee is authorized to accept year-end gifts of art offered to the Museums during the period of time from the final Acquisitions Committee meeting of a year to the end of that calendar year. The Director shall report these accepted gifts to the Acquisitions Committee, FAMF, and FAMSF Board of Trustees at their next meetings.

f) Expedited Approval of Gifts

When circumstances of a proposed gift require a decision before the Acquisitions Committee can be convened, the Director of Museums or their designee may accept a gift on behalf of the Museums effective immediately, provided they deem it appropriate and obtain approval from the Chair of the Acquisitions Committee. The Director shall report the gift to the Acquisitions Committee and to the FAMF and FAMSF Boards of Trustees at their next meetings.

g) Appraisals of Gifts

A gift of a work of art may be accepted by the Museum even though the donor has not obtained an appraisal. Donors seeking tax advantages in donating art objects to the Museums must secure their own appraisals. Neither the Museums nor its staff may provide donors with appraisals for income tax or estate tax purposes. The Museums will cooperate to make gift objects accessible to independent appraisers.

h) Gifts to the Foundation (FAMF)

In rare instances, at the behest of an individual donor, and upon approval of the Acquisitions Committee, FAMF may accept donations of art that will not be transferred to FAMSF and will instead remain administered by FAMF. In these cases, the FAMF Board, rather than the FAMSF Board, has the authority to approve or disapprove accessions, deaccessions, and loans of works of art from its collection.

i) Disposal of Non-accessioned Gifts of Art

The Museums may accept gifts or bequests of works of art that, by mutual agreement with the donor, will not be accessioned to the collection, but will instead be sold to benefit the Museums. These non-accessioned works will not go through the deaccessioning process and are not subject to the city code regarding disposal methods. Activities of this kind will be reported to the FAMF Acquisitions Committee. Unless otherwise specified by the donor, funds derived from the sale of non-accessioned art will go towards future art acquisitions.

IV. DEACCESSIONING

A. General Principles

Deaccessioning is the process whereby an artwork is removed from the collections. When deaccessioning an artwork, the Museums will balance the public interest, collection needs, the cost of perpetual stewardship, and the goal of refining the collection.

All deaccessioning must comply with the AAMD Policy on Deaccessioning; original donor restrictions or applicable court orders; and applicable laws. Works being deaccessioned from the FAMSF collection must also adhere to San Francisco Administrative Code Article VIII, Section 2A.155. Federal, State, and local laws supersede the FAMSF Collections Policy.

The Museums will strictly comply with all international, federal, and state laws (including NAGPRA/CalNAGPRA) regarding restitution and repatriation. Any restitution or repatriation claims and physical transfers will be reported to the Acquisitions Committee and the FAMF and/or FAMSF Board. Where feasible, standard deaccessioning procedures will be used to facilitate these returns.

B. Criteria for Deaccessioning

The criteria for deaccessioning an artwork includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- The artwork lacks art historical or institutional significance to justify retention in the collections
- The artwork is a duplicative of another artwork in the permanent collection and is deemed of equal or lesser value to retain.
- The artwork is in poor physical condition and cannot be conserved and/or stored in a responsible manner.
- The artwork can no longer be retained due to the Museums' inability to store or display the artwork.
- the Museums are ordered to return an artwork to its rightful owner by legal process (as in a case of repatriation)
- The Museums determine that the return of the artwork is otherwise in the Museums' best interest, including as a result of ethical inquiries.
- The artwork is determined to be a forgery, is not authentic, or is misrepresented and unsuitable to remain in the permanent collection. Forgeries must be indelibly marked or destroyed.

C. Process for Deaccessioning

The deaccession process requires deliberation and careful consideration by Museums staff and trustees. The deaccession process requires a two-step procedure:

1. Initiation & Preliminary Approval ("First-Step")

Deaccessioning an object from the collection is proposed to the Acquisitions Committee on the recommendation of the appropriate Curator with the approval of the Director, via a written justification ("Deaccessioning Statement"). Upon recommendation of the Acquisitions Committee, the FAMSF Board of Trustees may render a preliminary ("first-step") approval to deaccession.

2. Examination Period:

A minimum six-month examination period follows. Curators, Conservators, and Registrars will rigorously reexamine the object's quality, art-historical significance, provenance, state of conservation, acquisition terms, and reasons for removal. If necessary, they will seek legal counsel and independent expert opinions. The Museums will make a best effort to notify the donor (and/or heirs) and the artist (if still living) of the proposed action.

3. Final Approval ("Second-Step")

After the six-month examination period, the Acquisitions Committee may make a recommendation to formally deaccession the object from the collection. Upon recommendation of the Acquisitions Committee, the FAMSF Board of Trustees may render a final ("second-step") decision to deaccession. The FAMSF Board may also decide to not approve the deaccession and instead retain the object in the collection.

D. Re-accessioning

In rare cases, deaccessioned artworks remaining on Museums property can be accessioned back into the collection upon the recommendation of the Curator and approval by the Director. These artworks will be re-accessioned through the normal Acquisitions Committee process.

E. Methods of Disposal of Deaccessioned Objects

Once final deaccessioning approval is granted by the FAMSF Board, disposal of the artwork may be executed through one of the following methods, subject to San Francisco Charter Sec. 5.101 and the San Francisco Administrative Code Section 2A.155, as may be amended from time to time:

1. Public Auction

Deaccessioned works of art may be sold at public auction to the highest and best bidder. Whenever possible, the Museums should solicit competitive terms and estimates from multiple auction houses.

2. Private Sale

As a charitable trust department under the San Francisco Charter with “exclusive charge of its trust and other assets under its jurisdiction” (Charter Sec. 5.101), the Museums may use a private sale rather than go to a public auction if it is in the best interests of the Museums and the public. The FAMSF Board must provide prior approval of a private sale based upon the written recommendation of the Acquisitions Committee and the Director of Museums. There is no requirement to take a work to auction before proceeding with a private sale.

3. Exchanges

The Museums may exchange works of art for other objects of equivalent value.

4. Transfers

The Museums may transfer title to a work of art to another public or nonprofit institution when the transfer is in the public interest.

5. Destruction

If a work is a forgery or has deteriorated beyond repair, cannot be exhibited, and has lost its art-historical function, the FAMSF Board may approve or disapprove the Director’s recommendation to destroy the object after full deaccessioning.

F. Use of Funds from Deaccessioning

Administrative Code Sec 2.A.155.9 specifies that all moneys received from the sale of any work of art shall be placed in the trust fund of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and used for the purchase of other works of art to be exhibited in the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.

When possible, the name of the original donor(s) will be recognized and credited alongside a newly acquired work underwritten by relevant deaccession funds. Unless otherwise specified, funds realized from the sale of deaccessioned works will go towards the purchase of artworks from the same curatorial department or collection.

G. FAMF Deaccessioning Practices

Artworks administered by the FAMF will undergo the same two-step deaccessioning process outlined above, but are not subject to the disposal requirements of San Francisco Administrative Code Section 2A.155. All funds rendered from the disposal of artworks must be used exclusively for the acquisition of new art.

V. LEGAL AND ETHICAL GUIDELINES

A. Legal

The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco complies with all applicable local, state, and federal U.S. laws, most notably those governing ownership and import of works of art, such as the National Stolen Property Act (NSPA), the Convention on Cultural Property Implementation Act (CCPIA), sanctions enforced by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and the California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 2001 (CalNAGPRA), as well as the international treaty UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property.

Federal, State, and local laws supersede the Museums' Collections Policy. Since the status of a work of art under foreign law may bear on its legal status under U.S. law, the Museums shall also review relevant foreign laws before making an acquisition.

B. Professional Guidelines

The Museums follow applicable professional guidelines, including those established by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) and the American Art Museum Directors (AAMD). These guidelines include, but are not limited to, the AAMD Guidelines on the Acquisition of Archaeological Materials and Ancient Art (revised 2013), the American Alliance of Museums' Standards Regarding Archaeological Material and Ancient Art (revised 2008), and the professional standards set forth in the "Report of the Association of Art Museum Directors' Task Force on the Spoliation of Art during the Nazi/World War II Era (1933–1945)," and the AAM's "Guidelines Concerning the Unlawful Appropriation of Objects During the Nazi Era" (adopted November 1999, amended April 2001).

C. Ethical Considerations

FAMSF's collection has grown over a long period, during which time laws, ethical standards, and collecting practices have continued to evolve. As a result, the history of particular artworks in the Museums' collection may raise contemporary ethical concerns about the way in which they were acquired by prior owners. These concerns may exist even if there are no indications of unlawful acquisition, title defects, or other legal issues.

These concerns may be brought to the museum through inquiries made by communities or individuals with a direct connection to such artworks, or by research conducted by the museum. These inquiries will be considered deliberately, respectfully and thoughtfully on a case-by-case basis by the head of the Art Division, the Curator-in-Charge of the relevant Curatorial Department, and the Director of the Museums, in consultation with the City Attorney. Any proposal to resolve an inquiry regarding a specific artwork that impacts its title or possession will be presented to the Acquisitions Committee. If the proposal is acceptable to the Acquisitions Committee, it will be recommended for approval by the FAMSF Board of Trustees.

D. Staff and Board Ethical Guidelines Related to the Collection

1. Personal Collections & Conflicts of Interest

As potential collectors, Trustees, the Director of Museums and curatorial staff shall exercise extraordinary discretion to assure that no conflict or appearance of conflict arises between them and the objectives of the FAMSF, FAMF, and COFAM. They shall adhere to the Personal Collecting Guidelines set forth in the Museums' Code of Ethics.

Trustees, staff, and volunteers may not bring personal collections into the Museums without explicit permission from the Director or Chief Exhibitions and Collections Officer. All deposited personal art must undergo standard receipting and registration.

2. Acquisition of Deaccessioned Artwork

Objects slated for disposal must not be given or sold privately, or via auction, to FAMSF, COFAM, or FAMF employees, officers, volunteers, active Board Trustees, Acquisitions Committee members, or their immediate families, households, or representatives.

3. Prohibition Against Appraisal by Staff and Trustees

Active trustees, committee members, and professional staff are strictly prohibited from appraising external art objects in an official capacity. This restriction does not apply to former trustees, committee members, or staff.

VI. LOANS

A. Outgoing Loans

1. General Principles

The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco participates in loan programs that increase public access to artworks from the collection when such loans are consistent with the long-term preservation of the objects and the Museums' educational, research, and exhibition goals. The protection of works of art and the integrity of the Museums' displays are foremost in the consideration of loan applications.

2. Conditions for Making Loans

Outgoing loans may be made to other museums and institutions engaged in nonprofit, educational, and scholarly purposes. Loan requests must be evaluated in light of the art-historical and scholarly value of the exhibition, as well as to its importance to the museum community. Objects must be in exhibitable and stable condition and able to withstand the rigors of transit and handling. In addition, all objects must be registered by accession number, loan number, or non-accessioned number, and condition reported prior to loan. Loans to other institutions may not be contracted for a third-party loan without appropriate consent from the Museums.

It is the responsibility of the Curator of the collection to determine the insurance value of the outgoing object and, in cooperation with the Director and Registrar, and in consultation with the Conservator, to designate whether a courier for the artwork may be required.

3. Approval of Outgoing Loans

An outgoing loan may be recommended for approval when it is deemed appropriate by the applicable Curator, the venue is deemed appropriate by the Registrar, and its ability to withstand the rigors of travel and display is confirmed by the appropriate Conservator. Based upon this assessment, the loan may be endorsed by the most senior member of the Exhibitions and Collections Division (currently the Chief Exhibitions and Collections Officer) and forwarded to the Director.

The Director can approve the loan of an object valued at up to \$1,100,000 for up to eighteen months. The Director shall refer all other loan requests to the FAMSF Board of Trustees for approval.

In situations where an outgoing loan must be approved before it is feasible to convene the FAMSF Board or its Executive Committee, the Director may seek the written approval of the FAMSF Board President. All outgoing loans and the key terms shall be reported to the Board at its next meeting.

4. Documentation for Incoming and Outgoing Loans

All loans shall be for a specified time and shall be documented and monitored by the Office of the Registrar. All incoming or outgoing loans must be governed by written loan agreements between the Museums and its borrowers and lenders prior to receipt or shipment. Documentation photographs and current written condition reports shall be made for all loans entering or exiting the Museums.

5. Insurance of Incoming and Outgoing Loans

Incoming loans shall be insured by FAMSF, a government indemnity, or the lender, or a waiver of insurance shall be obtained. Outgoing objects shall be insured by the borrower, a government indemnity, or by FAMSF at the borrower's expense. Insurance shall be effected by the Office of the Registrar.

6. Monitoring Outgoing Loans

Loans shall be monitored by the Office of the Registrar for compliance with the terms of the loan. The appropriate Curator shall be notified of any relevant activity pending or required regarding a loan.

7. Long-Term Loans

In general, FAMSF no longer makes outgoing long-term loans. Previously-approved long-term loans (those over two years) should be reviewed by the Curator and Registrar at specified intervals to determine their future status, and to call them in whenever practicable.

The California Civil Code Section 1899 adopted in 1983 establishes that any object left in the possession of a museum for over twenty-five years with no action taken by the owner to recover the property, or to declare their intent to preserve ownership of the property, will be considered abandoned property and will become the property of the Museums.

Following curatorial review of such objects and with the approval of the Director of Museums, the Board of Trustees upon the recommendation of the Acquisitions Committee may accept abandoned objects into the permanent collections, or sell the abandoned objects at auction. The Museums will first attempt to contact the donor or heirs, where possible, in consultation with the City Attorney's office.

8. Loans to Non-Museum Borrowers

Under exceptional circumstances non-museum borrowers, such as government agencies and private galleries or corporations, may borrow objects for educational or exhibition purposes, and they must be able to provide full-time professional care for the objects. FAMSF must obtain facilities reports from new or unfamiliar borrowers. Objects may not be lent to individuals for personal use.

Works of art may be loaned to the offices of public officials elected by the citizens of San Francisco or California provided that the aggregate value of each loan does not exceed \$500,000, that the loans will be subject to biennial review according to FAMSF loan procedures, and that loan conditions will state the security and display conditions required by FAMSF for the safety of works of art.

B. Incoming Loans

Objects received at the Museums shall be accepted as loans for exhibition, consideration for acquisition, research and/or conservation. Before accepting any loan, the following factors should be weighed: availability of storage or exhibition space, transportation, insurance, the object's condition and ability to withstand travel, and the lender's restrictions. All objects received by the Museums must be properly receipted and registered by the Registrar within five days of arrival.

VII. COLLECTIONS CARE AND RECORDS

A. General Principles

Collections care and preservation of the collection are a core responsibility of the Museums. The Museums must provide a safe, stable and appropriate environment for collections on display and in storage. Appropriate and effective security, environmental control and monitoring, and standards for handling and installation shall be maintained. All collections care will be guided by the Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice of the American Institute for Conservation, the Code of Ethics of the Association for Registrars and Collections Specialists, and other applicable professional guidelines.

B. Roles and Responsibilities

The care and conservation of collection objects, as well as maintenance of accurate, up-to-date records on their identification, location, and condition, is a core responsibility of the Museums' professional staff.

1. Curatorial

Curators are responsible for the care of objects in their collections. Curators shall maintain digital and physical records regarding the objects within their custody. These records shall contain the information documented in the Registrar's files as necessary, as well as any material of an interpretive nature. It is the Museums' responsibility to present the best current information about works of art. Changes in the traditional attribution of works of art in the permanent collection may be made only with the approval of the appropriate curatorial department head.

2. Registration

The Office of the Registrar shall be responsible for fundamental accounting of all art, storage, packing and shipping of all objects passing in and out of the Museums' control and shall act as the control point for recording object movement and inventory control. Copies of condition reports and photographic documentation shall also be maintained by this office in order to safeguard the Museums' legal liability and provide basic collection accountability. Registrars shall work in concert with curatorial, conservation, and operations staff to assure safe handling and accurate documentation.

Registration shall maintain and make available to authorized staff original documents, digital records, and digital images of accessioned objects, objects on incoming and outgoing loans, and objects in the custody of the Museums. Any staff member or curatorial office possessing original documents establishing right and title to objects shall forward such documents to Registration. The primary purpose of these records is control and documentation of the collections. All art movement shall be recorded at the time of movement. The specific location of collection objects shall be verified by Registration utilizing spot and periodic comprehensive inventories.

3. Conservation

Conservators, in collaboration with the appropriate collection Curator and Registrar, shall be responsible for the physical care of collections. They set priorities, propose and carry out treatment action for collection objects in consultation with curatorial staff. In addition, the Conservator serves in an advisory capacity to other departments in matters concerning control of climate, pest control, safe methods for the installation and mounting of objects, lighting, proper storage conditions, handling of art objects, packing, and shipping. Conservators shall maintain records related to conservation and collections care measures, and specific to any examination, research and treatment of objects in the collection.

4. Collections Information and Digital Assets

The Museums have established electronic records of the permanent collection through a collections management database system that includes records of accessioned, deaccessioned, and loaned artworks. The primary responsibility of the oversight of the database shall reside within the Collections Information and Digital Assets team.

C. Insurance and Risk Management

The FAMSF and FAMF collections are covered by limited liability policy while on the premises of the Museums and are required to be insured in transit and while in the custody of borrowers. It is the responsibility of the relevant Curator to determine the insurance value of any work going on loan. Incoming loans shall be insured by FAMSF unless otherwise agreed with the lender. The Office of the Registrar will administer this insurance and assure that loan agreements and receipts are in hand to effect coverage. Staff members are required to report all damage or loss to the Director and Registrar as soon as discovered. The Registrar shall maintain related records and provide appropriate damage reports.

D. Emergency Procedures

Emergency procedures, maintained by the Facilities and Operations department, exist for the protection or evacuation of personnel and artwork from the Museums' buildings. These are detailed in the Museums' Emergency Handbook.

The Conservation and Registration and Collections Management departments are responsible for coordinating emergency response and preparedness for collections, including regular updates and training for collections-related areas of the Emergency Handbook.

F. Accessibility of the Collections

1. Responsibility to the Public

The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco shall strive to provide maximum accessibility of the collections to the public, consistent with the security and physical condition of the objects. The art collections on view should be made available to the general public within regular public hours. Reasonable requests for access to the collections not on public display and to study rooms shall be coordinated with the Curator of the department, and in the case of press access, with the Public Relations Office, which shall advise the Director of scheduled visits as far in advance as possible. For security reasons, no photography is permitted in storage areas, of artworks in transit, showing how artworks are secured, or as otherwise deemed to compromise the safety and security of artworks.

2. Online Access

With limited exceptions, FAMSF and FAMF accessioned collections shall be searchable from the FAMSF website. Continuously updated, the collections database contains artwork images and information. This should include, to the best of staff ability, provenance, exhibition history, and bibliography information for each accessioned artwork. Culturally sensitive works are not imaged on the website.

VIII. Effective Date

This Policy shall be effective immediately upon approval by the FAMSF Board of Trustees and shall supersede all prior policies on the topics addressed herein.

Approved XXX, 2026 by FAMSF Board of Trustees

PREVIOUS REVISIONS:

1/15/2019: Increase of dollar amounts in section PURCHASE BY DISCRETION

3/7/2019: Minor edits, formatting, change font, add table of contents, some sections moved.
Nothing deleted or added.