

GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY COUNCIL

Policy Number 02.POL1

Shepparton Art Museum Collection Development Policy

Version 2.0

Adopted 20 September 2011

Last Reviewed 20 June 2017

Business Unit:	Shepparton Art Museum
Responsible Officer:	Director SAM
Approved By:	Chief Executive Officer, Greater Shepparton City Council Director, Shepparton Art Museum
Next Review:	May 2020

PURPOSE

SAM is an Art Museum and follows the definition of a museum as defined by the International Council of Museums, and as such is a collecting institution which will continue to collect, exhibit and care for its collection.

The purpose of this policy is to provide parameters for collection development and provide a plan for how the collection will grow into the future, taking into consideration future audiences and current trends in contemporary art practice.

It is the responsibility of the Museum Director, Curator, Registrar and Shepparton Art Museum Advisory Committee (SAM Advisory Committee) to ensure that significant gaps in the collection of artworks *of our time* are not created.

OBJECTIVE

The Shepparton Art Museum Collection Development provides the strategic direction for the growth of the collection by delivering;

- A vision which confers the purposes and uses of the collection
- A description of collection areas, their strengths, significance, connection to key themes, and scope for improvement
- Guidelines and criteria for the acquisition and de-accessioning of artworks which establish collection priorities with regard to capacity for delivery
- A plan for growing the capacity of the Art Museum to collect
- A working list of contemporary artists being considered
- A plan for the identification of existing collection gaps within each area

SCOPE

This policy outlines the collection areas of Shepparton Art Museum, identifying what the focus of the collection is and stipulating the process by which artworks are acquired into the collection, and de-accessioned.

The policy outlines how funds will be utilised for the collections growth, focusing the expenditure of funds on contemporary works and the attraction of donations and gifts on filling historical gaps. The Policy is divided into the following areas;

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Collection areas | 4. Access to Collection |
| 2. Acquisition Guidelines | 5. Growing Capacity |
| 3. Acquisition Approval Processes | 6. De-accession Policy |

DEFINITIONS

Reference term	Definition
Art Museum	A museum is a non-profit making, permanent institution, in the services of society and of its development, and open to the public which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits for purposes of study, education and enjoyment, material evidence of man and his environment.

POLICY

1. SAM COLLECTION AREAS

Artworks will be acquired into the museum based on their capacity to fit within one of the following defined collection areas. Acquisition assessments must include a significance statement which identifies how a proposed acquisition will fit within one or more of these areas.

1.1 Contemporary Australian Ceramics and Art

The primary focus of the expenditure of funds is to develop a comprehensive collection of Contemporary Australian Art. The selection of works will be informed by the Museum's unique focus on the ceramic art medium, and should take into account relationship to existing objects in the collection and/or key themes surrounding materiality and craft traditions.

- i) A comprehensive collection of contemporary Australian ceramics. Contemporary art made from clay, may or may not be finished in traditional ways or fired ceramic, include re-contextualised found ceramic objects, other media or the documentation of temporary works.
- ii) Exemplary examples of contemporary art by significant or emerging Australian artists in a range of media which will contribute to the concerns and ideas inherent in the existing collection.
- iii) Exemplary examples of contemporary art by significant or emerging Australian artists in a range of media, which has a direct relationship to ceramic objects in the collection or be made by artists who predominantly work in clay.
- iv) Exemplary examples of art made by artists who are from, or currently reside in the Goulburn Valley or the wider region of North Central Victoria.

1.2 Australian Ceramics

The Australian ceramic collection should encompass all aspects of ceramic production in Australia, and be comprehensive in its representation of major trends and developments. It should also include more comprehensive collecting of significant artists throughout their careers, with representations of important periods of production.

- i) Exemplary examples of ceramic art by significant Australian ceramic artists.
- ii) Prior to 1960's, exemplary examples representing all the major commercial and artist run potteries.

1.3 Historical Australian Art

The Australian Art Collection has a number of significant works, but is not a comprehensive collection of all periods. While it is currently beyond the scope of the Museum to develop a comprehensive collection of Australian art there are a number of stronger focus areas within the collection which can be identified and built upon. These areas should inform retrospective collecting in particular where there is to be an expenditure of funds. Works gifted to the collection which are by significant Australian artists but do not fall into the below category should still be considered.

- i) Works which have a relationship to the existing ceramic collection, represent ceramics of interest, are by artists who are represented in the ceramic collection.
- ii) Early modernist paintings.
- iii) Abstract paintings.
- iv) Landscape paintings.
- v) Works from or about the Goulburn Valley Region or North Central Victoria.

1.4 Contemporary Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art and Ceramics

The Museum has a Contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ceramic Collection which should continue to be developed. The collection is growing rapidly through the biennale Indigenous Ceramic Art Award introduced in 2007. This is an acquisitive award, and where funds allow, other works are also considered for acquisition. This collection is an important addition to the Australian Contemporary Art and Ceramic collections, however can also be understood as a discreet collection category with common approaches, themes and content specific to the cultural background of the artists represented. The addition of contemporary artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists in other mediums, and significant artists representing issues, ideas or places relevant to our region, will enhance our understanding of the ceramic collection, and should be included in current collecting.

1.5 Contemporary International Ceramics

The Museum commenced an international collection of contemporary ceramics in 1993 when the Sidney Myer Fund Award became an international event, and currently spans 150 works.

The International ceramic collection is not intended to be a comprehensive collection, however should provide markers in time to contemporary ceramic art forms and identify the Museum's Australian ceramic collection within a broader global practise and dialogue.

The ability of the Museum to continue the development of this collection is something which will require ongoing review as the Museum grows and its programs develop.

Currently, the acquisition budget is not sizeable enough to consider using the expenditure of funds, to purchase international works. The primary focus of the ceramic collection is Australian art. Gifts of significant international artworks only should be considered that have clear exhibition, publishing, or educational benefit to the Museum.

If the SAM budget permitted, it would be beneficial to consider acquisitions in addition to the awards, in particular with reference to overseas artists and movements which have had a significant impact on Australian ceramics or ceramic artists.

- i) Winning contemporary artworks by international artists of the Sidney Myer Fund Australian Ceramic At Award.
- ii) Examples of British, European, Japanese or other ceramics which have brought to bear significant impact on Australian ceramics and ceramic artists.

2. ACQUISITION GUIDELINES

2.1 PRIORITIES OF CURRENT COLLECTING

The priorities of current collecting are defined as follows;

- a. Australian artists who are likely to become financially out of reach in 5 to 20 years.
- b. Less established Australian artists who are currently affordable and producing exemplary artwork, who have a strong career trajectory.
- c. Australian artists who have established practises over the last 15 to 25 years and whose practise represents artistic movements of the 1990-2010, and are able to fill a gap in contemporary collecting.
- d. Significant works which are deemed to be of extreme importance to the region or the collection but were over looked at the time of production, including but not exclusive to;
 - i. Lin Onus
 - ii. Sidney Nolan depictions of the Goulburn River
 - iii. Other historic works of or about the region

2.2 ACQUISITION FUNDS TO BE SPENT ON CONTEMPORARY COLLECTING

It is the ongoing responsibility of the Museum Director, Curator, Registrar and Shepparton Art Museum Advisory Committee (SAM Advisory Committee) to ensure that significant gaps in the collection of artworks of *our time* are not created.

It is the first goal of this strategy to ensure the comprehensive collecting of contemporary artworks as defined by collection areas.

Contemporary works which are not collected in the early career of artists become unattainable in time, and will leave future custodians with inherited gaps or lesser examples.

The Museum currently has limited collection resources. It is not in the interests of the Museum to purchase retrospectively by way of filling identified collection gaps, unless it is a modest sum or significant additional funds are solicited. Spending large sums in retrospective purchasing should not be done at the expense of contemporary collecting capacity.

With this in mind, the focus of retrospective purchasing should be on the ceramic collection, as it is within the scope of the Museum to develop a comprehensive collection of Australian ceramics.

Attempt should be made to identify and bridge historical gaps in the collection through gift or purchase.

2.3 IDENTIFICATION OF GAPS IN THE COLLECTION

Resources permitting, research should be undertaken into the identification of gaps in the collection, with research into the ceramic collection and related works being given priority. While works can be prioritised, retrospective purchasing will necessarily need to be guided by available works and opportunity.

2.4 PURCHASE OF EMERGING AND MID-CAREER AUSTRALIAN ARTISTS

Emerging and mid-career artists must be acquired mindful of inherent and calculated risk. The Museum can-not wait for artists to be represented by state institutions and be only guided by their activities.

In order to make the most of acquisition funds, emerging and mid-career artists demonstrating excellent aesthetic and conceptual thinking should be acquired. Following on, works selected should be of exceptional calibre and can be verified by external advisors where required.

The Director/Curator should seek out the advice of esteemed colleagues and also feel empowered to apply their own skills and judgement to decision making.

The likelihood of a continued and committed career should be a factor in decision making. The Director and Curator must ensure regular attendance at public, commercial, artist run galleries as well as symposia, art fairs, festivals and biennale if they are to fulfil the first objective of the collection.

Studio visits with emerging and mid-career artists must also be sought to participate in a dialogue about current thinking and stay in touch with potential opportunities.

2.5 SIGNIFICANT CONTEMPORARY WORKS BEYOND THE SCOPE OF GENERAL FUNDS

Where a contemporary work is deemed of significant value to the collection, specific fundraising drives should be entered into for the raising of express funds to enable the acquisition.

Where an artist is significantly established the request of discount, partial or total gift, should also be pursued.

3 ACQUISITION APPROVAL PROCESS

3.1 PROCESS FOR ACQUIRING ARTWORK

- a. The Art Museum Director is authorised to procure artworks within their financial delegation and up to the limit of the approved budget allocated to the procurement of artworks.
- b. The purchase of artworks of greater value than the Director's delegation or outside the approved budget must be done by Council resolution.
- c. When the Art Museum Director identifies an artwork which they consider would enhance the museum collection, they must present an acquisition assessment to the SAM Advisory Committee.
- d. All acquisition assessments need to comply with the above guidelines and must be assessed in accordance with the Priorities of Current Collecting and the Assessment Criteria.
- e. Acquisition assessments must have a statement of relevance to the collection areas as defined above.
- f. Artworks are acquired on the recommendation of the SAM Advisory Committee which is chaired by a member of the Greater Shepparton City Council.
- g. Should the Art Museum Director wish to procure an artwork which is not recommended by the SAM Advisory Committee, a Council Agenda Report is to be prepared for a Council meeting.
- h. Given the nature of artworks, being one off creations generally only available from one vendor, purchases of artworks into the collection are exempt from Greater Shepparton City Council's Procurement Policy. However acquisition assessments must make every effort to compare similar purchases or auction records and thereby demonstrate that artworks are being acquired at a competitive price representing best value.
- i. Once acquired the artwork is physically accessioned, documented in the Collection Catalogue, photographed, insured and found a location either in storage or on display for the purpose of study, education and enjoyment of the public.

3.2 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The following assessment criteria should be utilised by the SAM Advisory Committee to assist with the approval process of acquisition proposals.

Essential Criteria

- a. The artwork is of exceptionally high aesthetic and conceptual merit.
- b. The artwork has good potential for permanent, featured or touring exhibition.
- c. The artwork is an excellent fit within Shepparton Art Museum's collection areas.
- d. The artwork complies with the Museum's identified collection priorities and Guidelines.

Desirable Criteria

- e. The artwork has a relationship to the ceramic collection by virtue of its;
 - f. Materiality
 - g. Subject matter
 - h. History of craft traditions
 - i. Technique of production
- j. The artwork is by a significant Australian artist who should be represented in the collection.
- k. The artwork has excellent potential for use in educational programs.
- l. The artwork provides excellent opportunity for discussing themes that are relevant to our local region.

4. ACCESS TO COLLECTIONS

4.1 EXHIBITION

Our goal is to contextually exhibit the collection, keeping in mind the significance or otherwise of artworks and the duplication of artworks in the collection, in both permanent hangs and curated collection exhibitions.

To appropriately expand the permanent and temporary collection exhibition areas of the museum with a long term view of our growing collecting capacity and resourcing.

To tour curated exhibitions from the collection and loan collection works to and from other institutions for this purpose.

To consider the development of a public access collection store capable of being open to the public on a regular basis at designated times, and to make existing collection stores available for tour and viewings.

4.2 PUBLISHING

Our goal is to make the whole of the collection available to the public as a searchable database, and to consider into the future online exhibitions; further to engage in a program of publishing as stipulated in the Strategic Plan.

5. GROWING CAPACITY

Since 2007 interest has been compounding on a capital investment of gifted funds and funds built through the de-accession of Atkinson Grimshaw's *The Trysting Tree* in 2006. This investment together with the annual budget, the Friends of Shepparton Art Museum Society Inc. contribution and other donations, is now producing sufficient income to collect contemporary Australian art across media, with a ceramic specialisation.

In 2014, the sum of \$530,000 was transferred to the SAM Foundation to manage. Interest, minus reasonable administrative costs, will be paid by the Foundation to SAM for acquisitions annually.

Key actions are as follows;

5.1 ADVOCACY TO POTENTIAL DONORS FOR RESTROSPECTIVE AND UNASSAILABLE COLLECTING

It is the Director's and the Foundation's responsibility to seek out and advocate to potential donors (artists and collectors) on behalf of the unique and special parameters of our collection, and wherever appropriate to ask individuals to consider gifting. Contemporary artists who are already beyond the scope of the Museum's budget should be collected through gift or bequest and actively pursued as our first priority. Historical works should be collected through gift, donation or bequest. Where ever possible the cultural gift program should be promoted for the gift of partial or total works.

5.2 FOUNDATION

The Foundation will be the key driver for growing acquisition funds, through investment, gift and donor programs. The Museum Director must make available to the Foundation a current and up to date Acquisition Strategy for this purpose.

5.3 FRIENDS OF SHEPPARTON ART MUSEUM SOCIETY INC

The Friends of Shepparton Art Museum Society Inc. are significant partners in the raising of acquisition funds for the purpose of acquisition through membership and

activity. After the establishment of the Foundation they will continue to play an important role in this regard.

They are a conduit between the community and its desires for the development of the collection, and SAM. The Acquisition Strategy must also be made available to the committee for the purpose of their own fundraising, and to enable them to consider potential acquisitions they may wish to work toward.

5.4 GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY COUNCIL

Beyond the establishment of the Foundation it is essential that the commitment of the Council continue, providing income in each budget year for the purchase of artworks. As the scope of the Friends of Shepparton Art Museum Society Inc. and the Foundation's fundraising increases so too should that which the Council contributes.

Each year it is the Director's responsibility to report to the Council on acquisitions to the collection, the value of gifted works and the amount of funds raised to this end. Funds budgeted for acquisitions should match those which are raised from the community.

5.5 OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

It is the Director's responsibility to take up every reasonable opportunity for the attainment of acquisition funds each year, such as the Robert Salzer Fund, and to appropriately acknowledge endowments and gifts received.

The policy clarifies the place of contemporary art of all media as being the prime focus for the expenditure of funds and offers guidance for the determination of what to collect in this field.

6. DEACCESSIONING POLICY

The following guidelines form the Shepparton Art Museum De-accessioning Policy. This policy is founded in Museums Australia Code of Ethics (see Appendix 2) and the International Code of Museum Ethics (see Appendix 3). These professional associations set minimum standards of professional practice and performance for museums and their staff.

6.1 DE-ACCESSIONING COMMITTEE

The SAM Advisory Committee will act as the De-accessioning Committee and decide if works of art in the collection are to be disposed of and how. When de-accessioning artwork the following people must be present to advise and make ethical decisions.

- a. The Art Museum Director
- b. The Art Museum Curator
- c. The Chairperson of the SAM Advisory Committee
- d. At least two other members of the Art Museum Committee

6.2 CRITERIA FOR DE-ACCESSIONING ART WORKS

The aim of adopting a de-accessioning Policy is to improve the quality of the collection by cautiously disposing of works which:

- a. Fall outside of the collection policy of the Museum
- b. Are of little or no significance historically
- c. Are of little or no significance aesthetically
- d. Are not useful for the Museum's area of research
- e. Are not useful for educational purposes
- f. Are irreversibly damaged - unless they are required for research purposes

6.2.1 Space constraints must not be a criterion for de-accessioning works.

6.2.2 Art fashions and popular taste must not be a criterion for de-accessioning works.

6.2.3 Works which fall outside of the major collection areas of the Museum, but are of highly significant historical, aesthetic and educational value, and are widely known to be part of the Shepparton collection, should not be de-accessioned.

6.3 PROCESS FOR DEACCESSIONING ARTWORKS

Works will be submitted to the De-accessioning Committee by a de-accessioning proposal, which shall contain an examination of the works in the light of all the following considerations:

- a. The relevance of the work to the acquisition policy
- b. The historical significance of the work in regard to the development of the artist and/or the development of art/craft in Australia
- c. The aesthetic merit of the work
- d. The educational/research value of the work.

6.3.1 The de-accession proposal shall also include the following information:

- a. A photograph of the work.
- b. An estimate of its market value.
- c. The source through which it is to be sold/exchanged. This source should be encouraged to maintain confidentiality.

6.3.2 The recommendation to de-accession the art work must then be presented to the Art Museum Committee for approval. A waiting period of two years must then occur before the works can be officially de-accessioned. Once the two year period has lapsed since the Committee's decision to de-accession the work, the De-accessioning Committee must be re-convened and its approval sought again. If it grants approval an appropriate recommendation must then be made to Council.

6.3.3 When a work has been de-accessioned, details shall be recorded on Museum records pertaining to the work and the decision formally recorded in the Art Museum Committee minutes. These records shall be available for inspection by appointment by any person.

6.4 DE-ACCESSIONING OF GIFTS

Where the Museum received as gifts works which are deemed inappropriate to the collection, the De-accessioning Committee may dispose of the works under the following conditions:

- a. The approval of the donor is obtained.
- b. If the donor is deceased, approval shall be obtained from his/her executors where possible.
- c. Income derived from the disposal of gifts must be used to purchase a work or works in lieu of the original gift. The donor's generosity must be perpetuated by appropriate acknowledgment, shown with replacement of work/works (eg. 'Purchased with the Cyril Smith Fund'). This is in order to acknowledge the generosity of past donors and to guard against jeopardising prospective donations.

6.5 INCOME DERIVED FROM DE-ACCESSIONED ARTWORKS

Funds derived from de-accessioning shall be used only to acquire new works.

6.6 POTENTIAL DONORS TO BE INFORMED

Potential donors of works to the Museum should be informed of the Museum's de-accessioning policy.

6.7 ACCEPTANCE OF DONATIONS

The Museum shall not accept irrelevant or insignificant work on the condition that it never be sold. The Museum's policy of maintaining integrity of credit lines (referred to above) should be pointed out to prospective donors.

6.8 CONTENTIOUS PROPOSALS

Where a de-accessioning proposal becomes contentious, the proposal should be deferred or abandoned.

6.9 ACQUISITION OF DEACCESSIONED WORKS PROHIBITED TO CERTAIN PARTIES

Members of the Art Museum Committee, Councillors or Officers of the City of Greater Shepparton or members of their families, shall not be permitted to acquire de-accessioned works, nor benefit financially from de-accessioning in any way.

6.10 INTERPRETATION OF POLICY

Questions of interpretation of this policy shall be referred to the Art Museum Committee for determination.

6.11 EXCLUSIONS FROM DE-ACCESSIONING

Prizes, specific grants and gifts from the Cultural Gifts Program shall be excluded from de-accessioning.

RELATED POLICIES AND DIRECTIVES

N/A

RELATED LEGISLATION

N/A

REVIEW

The Policy is to be reviewed by the Director of the Shepparton Art Museum in consultation with the Shepparton Art Museum's Advisory Committee every three years.



21/7/17

Peter Harriott
Chief Executive Officer
Greater Shepparton City Council

Date

