

Capturing the Current Scope: A Holdings Survey Initiative at the Detroit Institute of Arts' Research Library and Archives

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Abstract:

The Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA) proposed a NEH Humanities Collection & References foundation project (beginning in June 2016) to establish intellectual control of its archives. The proposal entailed a holdings survey initiative to capture the current scope of materials housed in the archives, assess the humanities value of unprocessed archival documents held at the DIA, identify preservation issues, and recommend next steps towards improving access and stewardship of these important materials. Collaborating with an advisory team of experts outside the library profession—including curators, filmmakers, conservators, and academics—was a key phase of this process to provide crucial data needed to systematically evaluate all future archival undertakings. The purpose of this case study is to review the results as well as the standards and workflows put in place for conducting this yearlong survey of the Museum's archives. This poster details how the Research Library and Archives (RL&A) structured the survey to capture and assess collected information, what the outcome of the survey was based on the applied criteria, and the ways the RL&A plans to promote and enhance its collections based on the aggregated results of this pilot project.

About the Author:

Danae Dracht is a member of the Society of American Archivists and a recent graduate from Wayne State University with a MLIS degree and a Graduate Certificate in Archival Administration. She received a BA in English from Spring Arbor University. Previously, Ms. Dracht worked at the Conrad R. Lam Archives at Henry Ford Hospital (Detroit, MI) and the Cranbrook Archives in the Cranbrook Center for Collections and Research (Bloomfield Hills, MI). Additionally, she interned at the Detroit Institute of Arts' Research Library & Archives for over a year before assuming her role in the NEH-funded holdings initiative as Project Archivist.