

CAPTURING THE CURRENT SCOPE: A HOLDINGS SURVEY INITIATIVE AT THE DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS' RESEARCH LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE MUSEUM

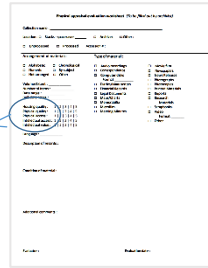
- Encompasses a 132-year history
- Encyclopedic art collection illuminating 8,000 years of human culture across six continents
- Written records exist for nearly all 65,000 objects held at the Museum
- Museum's 13,100 square foot Research Library & Archives (RL&A) house these documents, which date back to 1883

PHASE ONE: PAPER-BASED MATERIALS (JUNE-DECEMBER 2016)

The HSP method uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative measures to assess archival holdings on a collection level. We adopted and modified the survey method to some degree to fit our particular needs.

Physical Appraisal Evaluation Worksheet

- Housing quality
- Physical quality
- Physical access
- Intellectual access
- Intellectual value



THE DIA AND THE 2013 CITY OF DETROIT BANKRUPTCY



Largest municipal bankruptcy filing in U.S. history by debt, estimated at \$18 billion, and by population, over 700,000 residents.

The DIA was the city's most valuable asset. Following the bankruptcy filing, creditors asked for the sale of DIA art.

During bankruptcy proceedings, the DIA's primary source materials helped save the museum. The documents showed that the majority of the museum's holdings came from non-City of Detroit support. These records were used extensively during the approval of a financial agreement that would come to be known as the "Grand Bargain" to allow Detroit to emerge from bankruptcy and transfer ownership of the museum's art collection and building to the DIA.

POST-BANKRUPTCY

Following Detroit's bankruptcy and its resolution, the museum has better financial stability than at any other time in its modern history. With financial stability and a bankruptcy behind it, the DIA has resumed its commitment to its archival activities.



MOVING FORWARD POST CRISIS WITH A REVITALIZED APPRECIATION FOR THE MUSEUM ARCHIVES: A FOUNDATION PROJECT FUNDED BY THE NEH

In 2015, the DIA proposed a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) funded Humanities and Collection & Resources foundation project (that began in June 2016) to establish intellectual control of its archives. The proposal entailed a holdings survey and assessment of the physical state and humanities value of unprocessed archival collections held at the DIA. Six objectives were proposed in the NEH Humanities Collection & References foundation project application. They were to:

- 1) capture the current scope of materials housed in the Archives,
- 2) analyze and evaluate the humanities content,
- 3) improve control over the collection,
- 4) assess unprocessed materials against updated records retention schedules,
- 5) identify preservation issues, and
- 6) recommend next steps towards improving access to the Archives and stewardship of these important materials.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this case study is to review the methodologies and results put in place for conducting a yearlong holdings survey of the Detroit Institute of Arts' archival materials.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- R1. How did the Library structure the holdings survey to capture and assess collected information?
- R2. What are the results of the survey based on the applied criteria?
- R3. What are the Library's future projects to promote and enhance its collections?

METHODS AND RESEARCH DESIGN

We adapted the collection survey methodology formulated by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP) for amassing and tracking our findings. Using peer-reviewed literature as a reference, we defined the range of the survey, terms, and ranking criteria to use throughout surveying process for creating the final summary document, which served as the baseline for the advisory team members.

INTELLECTUAL VALUE RATINGS

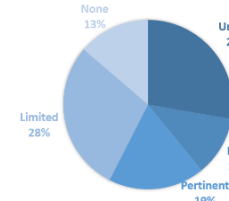
The Project Team supplied a selected group of advisors with a rubric for determining intellectual value and asked each to provide his or her informed opinions (ranking collections 1-5).

ADVISORY TEAM MEMBERS

1. Elizabeth Clemens (Audiovisual Archivist, Wayne State University)
2. Grace Raso (Documentary Filmmaker)
3. James Hanks (Archivist, DIA Research Library & Archives)
4. Jeffrey Abt (Art Historian, Author)
5. Lawrence Baranski (Director, Public Programming)
6. Maria Ketcham (Director, DIA Research Library & Archives)
7. Rudy Lauerman (Manager, Public Programming)
8. Yao-Fen You (Associate Curator, Curatorial – European Art)

RESULTS

The Intellectual Value rating was comprised of two different evaluations. First: the current research value of a given collection. Second: the informational richness or breadth and depth of the collection



Unique	224
High	98
Pertinent	155
Limited	226
None	105

These two evaluations were considered and weighed separately before being merged to come up with a single numerical ranking for the collection on a 1-5 scale:

- None: 1
- Limited: 2
- Pertinent: 3
- High: 4
- Unique: 5

OF THE PAPER-BASED COLLECTIONS

41% are processed
10% low processed ranking based on intellectual value and condition
13% will not require processing based on the scope of their materials

Housing quality:
6% Poor
52% Fair
23% Good
19% Excellent

Physical access:
1% No access
13% Poor
47% Fair
39% Good
5% Excellent

With the outcomes of these rankings, the project team was able to organize a list of collections that scored low on the disposition rankings and high on the intellectual value rankings for prioritizing future processing and digitization goals. The RL&A staff will include these results from the survey into their proposal for the NHPRC implementation grant to raise enough funds to accomplish their planned objectives.

Intellectual access:
4% Terrible
24% Poor
41% Fair
31% Good
4% Excellent

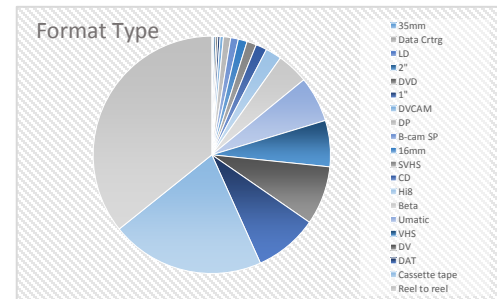
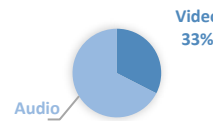
Physical quality:
9% Poor
53% Fair
30% Good
7% Excellent

PHASE TWO: AUDIOVISUAL MATERIALS (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

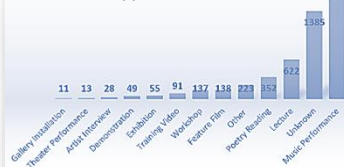
AV RECORDS IN FILEMAKER PRO
3,893 CATALOGED RECORDS

PRACTICUM STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

- 18 CREDITS, 405 HOURS PRACTICUM STUDENTS
- 4 GRADUATE PRACTICUM STUDENTS
- 2 UNDERGRADUATE PRACTICUM STUDENTS



Content Type



OTHER PURPOSES:

- QUALITY CONTROL
- PROVIDE SUFFICIENT DOCUMENTATION FOR NEW PRESERVATION ISSUES
- LEGAL RIGHTS
- OBSOLETE AV FORMATS

SUMMARY

- NEXT STEPS AND LONG-TERM IMPACT
- COLLECTIONS-LEVEL ACCESS
- LANGUAGE FOR DIGITAL PRESERVATION POLICY
- PRIORITIZE PRESERVATION NEEDS
- INFORM WORKFLOWS
- FOUNDATION FOR A FUTURE DIGITIZATION PROJECT
- IMPROVEMENTS IN DESCRIPTION AND ACCESS

1 / 25 pages Archives inventory, 1979

1 - 4 / 144 pages Archives inventory, 2017