

WHITNEY

**COLLECTIONS
MANAGEMENT
POLICY**



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On cover: Installation view of
*The Whitney's Collection: Selections
from 1900 to 1965* (Whitney
Museum of American Art, New York,
June 28, 2019- May, 2022). From
left to right: Archibald John Motley,
Jr., *Gettin' Religion*, 1948; Jay DeFeo,
The Rose, 1958-1966; [top] Jacob
Lawrence, *War Series: Going Home*,
1947; [bottom] Jacob Lawrence,
War Series: Prayer, 1947. Photograph
by Ron Amstutz

MISSION STATEMENT

The Whitney Museum of American Art seeks to be the defining museum of twentieth- and twenty-first-century American art. The Museum collects, exhibits, preserves, conducts research, and interprets art of the United States in the broadest global, historical, and interdisciplinary contexts. As the preeminent advocate for American art, we foster the work of living artists at critical moments in their careers. The Whitney educates a diverse public through direct interaction with artists, often before their work has achieved general acceptance.

VALUES STATEMENT

The Whitney Museum of American Art was founded by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney in 1930. An artist and philanthropist, she believed that artists were essential to defining, challenging, and expanding culture. The Museum became a site where artists and audiences engaged openly with untested ideas. Today, this history informs who we are and how we serve our public. The Whitney believes:

our present and that contemporary art can help us better understand our past and realize our future;

- that we must lead with expertise, debate, self-reflection, and integrity;
- that the Whitney thrives because of relationships—among artists, audiences, staff, and the Board alike—forged from dialogue, premised on respect, and committed to a shared purpose.

- in the power of artists and art to shape lives and communities;
- that we must be as experimental, responsive, and risk-taking as the artists with whom we collaborate;
- in creating experiences that engage and raise questions for our audiences, and, in turn, learning from our audiences;
- that our work embraces complexity and encourages an inclusive idea of America;
- in the importance of history: that the past informs

PURPOSE OF THE COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Professional museum management requires a written collection policy and clear guidelines for its implementation. This document has been developed by the staff of the Whitney Museum of American Art (the Whitney or the Museum), with the encouragement and approval of the Board of Trustees, to fulfill this need and serve as a comprehensive governing code for its collections management practices.

This document addresses all aspects of collections management, including the acquisition, use, and proper care of all works; deaccessioning; and the incoming and outgoing loan of objects for exhibitions.

The principles embodied herein help ensure that the following objectives are met:

- That objects acquired fulfill the Whitney's mission and goals.
- Guide the prudent acquisition (and deaccession) of objects and ensure that specific standards are met.
- Guide those making decisions concerning the collection's growth—decisions that may involve professional, ethical, or legal considerations.
- Acknowledge the Whitney's external accountability to professional museum standards, the public, and legal standards.
- Ensure maintenance of the requisite internal communication, accountability, and continuity between current and future staff members.
- Advance conservation and care of the collection.
- Encourage and facilitate scholarship on the collection to both internal and external scholars.
- Ensure accurate, current, and ongoing documentation of the collection.

This Collections Management Policy should be reviewed periodically and updated and improved when necessary. The process for such review and modification involves designated Whitney staff members, the Committee on Collections, and the Board of Trustees.

The Director, the Chief Exhibitions and Collection Officer, the Director of Collection Management and the Chief Curator are responsible for monitoring the Museum's compliance with this policy.

The Chief Exhibitions and Collection Officer is responsible for recommending changes to the Committee on Collections in order to keep the document current and consistent with best practices.

Staff recommendations for changes should be made to the Chief Exhibitions and Collection Officer, who will consult with appropriate administrative and curatorial staff. Board recommendations for changes must be made to a member of the Committee on Collections for consideration at its next meeting.

POLICY OVERSIGHT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The ultimate responsibility for the Whitney's collection rests with the Museum's Director and Board of Trustees. The Chief Exhibitions and Collection Officer, Chief Curator, Director of Collection Management, as well as staff from Registration, Research Resources, Collection Management, Curatorial, and Legal departments share responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the policies, and, in their daily work, the Museum's entire staff must adhere to the policy's principles and practices.

COLLECTIONS COMMITTEES

The Whitney maintains several committees that are directly involved in the growth and stewardship of the Museum's collection. These include a Curatorial Committee, five Acquisition Committees, and a Committee on Collections. Together, and through their distinct roles, these committees share responsibility for approving all acquisitions by the Museum for subsequent ratification by the Board of Trustees.

Curatorial Committee

The Curatorial Committee is led by the Chief Curator and comprises curatorial staff and the Director. This committee meets on a biweekly cadence to discuss the Museum's collection, exhibition program, and all other matters related to the Whitney's curatorial function. As part of its responsibilities, the Curatorial Committee reviews

and votes on all gifts, partial and promised gifts, bequests, exchanges, and purchases made with restricted acquisition funds. All works approved for acquisition by the Curatorial Committee are submitted for approval and subsequent ratification by the Board of Trustees.

Acquisition Committees

The Whitney's five Acquisition Committees are dedicated to growing the Museum's collection through purchases of artwork utilizing committee-donated funds. Each Acquisition Committee is led by a Chair or Co-Chair and focuses on a particular artistic medium. The Whitney's committees include the Painting and Sculpture Committee, Drawing and Print Committee, Photography Committee, Film and Video Committee, and Digital Art Committee.

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An Acquisition Committee's role is to review and vote on artworks determined worthy of acquisition by the Committee's curatorial lead in dialogue with the Director and the Committee's Chair or Co-Chairs. All works approved for acquisition by an Acquisition Committee proceed to the Board of Trustees for subsequent ratification.

Committee on Collections

The Committee on Collections is chaired by a Trustee Chair or Co-Chairs approved by the Board of Trustees and consists of representatives of Acquisition Committees, the Director, and other Trustees appointed by the Board. The Chief Exhibition and Collections Officer, Chief Curator, Director of Conservation, General Counsel, and Director of Collections Management attend meetings of this Committee.

The Committee on Collections has oversight and responsibility over certain administrative and procedural

aspects of the collection; votes on works proposed for deaccessioning; periodically reviews the collection policy; recommends changes in the structure, policy, or procedures of existing Acquisition Committees; and proposes the creation of new Acquisition Committees. It also brings issues affecting the Whitney's collection before the Board of Trustees.

ACQUISITION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Artworks are added to the Whitney's collection by means of purchases, gifts, bequests, exchanges, or any other transactions by which title to objects can legally pass to a museum. All works formally entering the collection must pass under the review of the Curatorial Committee or one of the Acquisition Committees. Although the Director retains primary responsibility for the Museum's collection, no work will enter the collection unless it is voted on and approved by an Acquisitions Committee or, if a gift, by the Curatorial Committee. The Director, Curators, Trustees, and Acquisition Committee members may not independently commit the Museum to either purchasing a work or receiving a donation.

Final votes on works proposed to the Acquisition Committees and Curatorial Committee occur after a work has been evaluated on-site. To initiate this process, sponsoring curators must submit a Proposal for Acquisition form to the Head Registrar, Permanent Collection, in advance of the Acquisition Committee or Curatorial Committee meeting at which a work is to be presented.

In all acquisition processes, the Whitney should evaluate the physical and material conditions of the artwork before approvals are made. Conservation reviews of purchases as well as gifts should be conducted in advance whenever possible. Works of art considered for acquisition must be in stable, presentable condition for exhibition or be able to be properly treated so that they can be exhibited. Works with significant damage should not be accepted unless there is a clear conservation plan in place.

It is the responsibility of the sponsoring curator to notify the donor or the vendor immediately after a decision about an acquisition has been made so that either the object can be returned as quickly as possible or formal acquisition procedures can begin.

Some artworks, such as those made of perishable materials or created with evolving technologies, challenge long-term preservation methods. Such acquisitions should be considered on a case-by-case

basis with careful review of stewardship plans going forward.

Once works have been approved by the Acquisition Committees or Curatorial Committee for inclusion in the collection, the Research Resources and Collection Management department must submit a list to the Board of Trustees for ratification. Ratification by the Board constitutes an artwork's final acceptance into the Museum's collection.

Purchases

Works of art categorized as purchases are those works bought by the Museum with endowed funds, Acquisition Committee funds, restricted funds given to the Museum by a private source, or any combination thereof.

Gifts

Any donation of art by an individual or organization is categorized as a gift. To make a valid gift, there must be a clear intention on the part of the donor to transfer title and possession of the property. After a work is presented to and accepted by the Curatorial Committee, the donor is required to sign a standard Deed of Gift and upon receipt of the signed Deed of Gift, the work will be presented for ratification at the following Board meeting.

When timing or other constraints make it impractical or impossible to present a work offered as a gift (e.g., end-of-year gifts) to the full Curatorial Committee, the Director has discretionary authority to approve the work, in consultation with a temporary committee composed of members of the curatorial staff, a conservator, as well as Registration and Collection Management staff.

The Museum will provide acknowledgment to the donor verifying receipt of the gift. Upon the Museum's receipt from the donor of Form 8283 for signature, a copy of the completed form—including certification of appraisal—will be retained as part of the object

record. In accordance with AAMD policy, the Museum does not provide (or pay for) appraisals of artworks for donors' tax purposes.

Promised Gifts

A promised gift is a binding commitment by a donor to give a work to the Museum. All promised gifts must be presented to the Curatorial Committee for review and approval. Once the Committee accepts a work, the donor is required to sign a Deed of Promised Gift. Owners of promised gifts who maintain custody must allow the Museum to borrow the works for exhibition, and to administer loans of the promised objects.

Partial and Promised Gift

A donor may give part of a work and promise to give the remainder of the work at a later time. This arrangement is called a partial and promised gift. All partial and promised gifts must be presented to the Curatorial Committee for review and approval. Upon acceptance, donors must sign a Partial and Promised Gift Agreement committing to complete the gift at or before their death. Donors should consult with their tax and legal advisors to ensure that the gifts are made in accordance with applicable law.

Property

On rare occasions, a work that is not suitable for the Whitney's collection will be accepted as Property. In these instances, the work is catalogued and photographed but not given an accession number. The Museum should regularly review items in Property with the aim to reduce and restrict the total number of items.

If Property is sold, funds can be used to purchase artwork for the collection. Such work should be credited as a purchase with funds from the donor of the Property, unless the donor chooses not to be credited.

Exchanges

In exceptional circumstances, works of art may be acquired through the exchange of one work for another. This may take the form of an agreed-upon trade with a living artist or with the estate of an artist, gallery, or other source. To initiate an exchange, the collection object being exchanged must first be deaccessioned. After discussion with the Curatorial Committee, the sponsoring curator must present a Proposal for Acquisition and all records should indicate the circumstances of the exchange. Furthermore, any artworks selected to replace deaccessioned

works must be approved by the Curatorial Committee and the Committee on Collections, and then ratified by the Board of Trustees.

Bequests

When the Museum is first notified that it is a beneficiary of a bequest, the curators must determine the specific works included and any terms of the bequest. A copy of the will, or pertinent portion thereof, should be obtained from the estate by the General Counsel, so that the nature of the gift can be verified and photographs of the work(s) can be requested.

Bequests do not have to be accepted by the Museum. The curators may recommend to the Director that all, some, or no works are accepted for the collection or that all, some, or none are accepted as Property. For accepted bequests, a copy of the will, all codicils, and the letters of testamentary should be maintained in the collection files.

Restrictions

By resolution of the Board of Trustees (January 22, 1974), the Whitney may not accession works that are restricted with respect to their exhibition, maintenance, or disposal. Once the Whitney takes possession of an artwork, it should have the sole right to determine how and when that work is shown, safeguarded, or deaccessioned, subject to standard museum practice.

Under rare circumstances, the Museum may agree to accept restrictions on an artwork, in which case a formal justification must be included in the Proposal for Acquisition. Any restrictions on a work or a collection of works (other than reproduction restrictions) must be presented to the Director and the Committee on Collections, which will make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees or Executive Committee for approval.

PROVENANCE

Artworks coming into the Whitney's collection must have an established provenance. The curator sponsoring the work should ascertain a work's provenance through contacts with artists, donors, and dealers, to the extent possible. Curators recommending an acquisition should be prepared to defend the legality and the morality of the transfer of ownership. An object will not be accessioned into the Permanent Collection without proof of a transfer of title, such as a signed Deed of Gift or original bill of sale, in hand.

CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION

The Head of Conservation and the Conservation staff are responsible for the Whitney's overall collection conservation program. They shall manage operating funds; approve, monitor, and complete conservation treatments; initiate and direct conservation research and projects; undertake technical studies of works in the collection; and remain informed of technical advances and changes in the conservation field. Conservators will consult with artists and appropriate colleagues about conservation issues and will inform those involved of progress.

COLLECTION DOCUMENTATION

The Whitney is responsible for the creation and maintenance of accurate records on the history, identification, location, and condition of works in the collection. Collection documentation is an ongoing process, and it is essential that state-of-the-art electronic equipment, software, and concomitant staff training be provided for documentation maintenance, efficient retrieval, and keeping up with collection growth.

Every work in the Whitney's collection receives a unique Museum number for easy retrieval of the work itself and of its object information. The Registration department is responsible for the creation, maintenance, and preservation of collection acquisition records, records for works accepted as property for future

disposal, works being considered for acquisition, loan records, records of deaccessioned objects, and records for objects borrowed for exhibition.

LOANS

The tradition of lending objects from the Whitney's collection to other museums is in keeping with the professional practice of major art museums. Sharing the work of artists in the collection with as broad an audience as possible is a continuation of the Museum's original mission. The Whitney is itself an active borrower and therefore has a collection loan system in place.

Outgoing Loans

Loan requests are evaluated on the basis of several factors, including: the availability of the object(s); ability of the object(s) to withstand the physical conditions presented by the loan (packing, transportation, handling, light and climatic conditions); adequacy of the proposed borrower's facility and ability to meet required security standards; amount of lead time given to properly prepare the loan; importance of the exhibition; whether or not a scholarly catalogue will be published in conjunction with the project; the importance

of the solicited object(s) to the exhibition; the loan history of the work(s); the physical condition of the object(s); the time and cost of any required conservation of the work(s); the ability of the borrower's staff to handle and install the object(s); the availability of an appropriate Whitney staff member trained to accompany, unpack, install, dismantle, and repack the loan if necessary.

For consideration by the Museum, a formal written request for a loan(s) must be received from an organizing/inquiring institution as follows:

For domestic venues, loan requests must be received at least six months in advance of the exhibition opening date. All supplementary materials for any domestic request (slight changes in dates of exhibition, facility reports, hygromograph readings, etc.) must be received no later than four months in advance of the exhibition opening date in order for the request to be considered.

For venues outside of the United States, loan requests must be received at least nine months in advance of the exhibition opening date. All supplementary materials for any international request (dates of exhibition, facility reports, hygrothermograph readings, etc.) must be received no later than seven months in advance of the exhibition opening date in order for the request to be considered.

Loan requests are reviewed and approved by the Loan Committee, a group consisting of the Director, Curatorial, Registration, Exhibition and Collections Management, and Conservation staff. Each loan must be approved for a specific period and specific venue(s).

The Conservation department is responsible for determining whether or not an object can be approved for installation or loan in its current condition. Thorough examinations are made by conservators prior to an object's being approved for loan, while condition reports—prepared by registrars—are written prior to an object being packed, upon unpacking at each borrowing institution, upon packing at each borrowing institution, and as soon as possible after its return (ideally, within forty-eight hours of delivery to its normal storage location and, in all cases, immediately upon being unpacked). An object's conservation history and vulnerabilities are taken into consideration when making loan, handling, packing, transportation, and installation decisions. The Museum may require inspection of the object(s) by a member of the Conservation or Registration department during the period of the loan.

After a loan has been approved, the Museum requires any additional works requested for loan and/or any additional venues requested for an exhibition tour be submitted for review at least three months in advance of the opening date of the exhibition.

The Museum defrays the cost of administering its loan program by charging nonrefundable Loan Fees.

Special Circumstances

Loan requests for large numbers of works require significant staff time and resources. Requests to loan more than five works may entail a special credit and/or fee to be negotiated at the discretion of the Director in consultation with the Loan Committee.

Furthermore, an exhibition at another institution that is composed entirely of Whitney collection objects must be curated by a Whitney staff member and treated as a collection show.

Objects valued at \$10 million or more are presented to the Board of Trustees or the Executive Committee of the Board (whichever group is scheduled to meet soonest) for final approval.

A loan request will be denied if the object is to be exhibited in a nonpublic space; to be used for promotional, propaganda, or nonaesthetic purposes of the borrower; or to be used as part of an interactive "hands-on" display.

Incoming Loans

Official loan requests must be submitted in writing, and all original documents and a copy of the request are to be forwarded to the Registration department. A Loan Agreement form, signed by the lender and countersigned by a representative of the Registration department, must be on file prior to the movement of an artwork to the Museum.

Receipts are issued to the lender within three days of an object's arrival and within three days of its return. The Whitney must receive confirmation of an object's return and its condition upon return in the form of a signed receipt.

Borrowed objects are registered, documented, and monitored by the Registration department, which is also responsible for packing, transporting, receiving, unpacking, incoming and outgoing condition reports, receipts, and the return of objects.

The Research Resources department arranges for installation photographs to be taken as soon as possible after an exhibition's opening for both security and archival purposes.

Extended/Long-Term/Indefinite Loans

The Whitney has a policy of not accepting responsibility for any object except when it has been acquired, promised to the Museum, when it is being considered for acquisition, or when it has been borrowed for a specific exhibition or display period. Long-term deposit of objects with the Museum results in free storage and insurance for the owner at high cost to the Museum. Any deviation from this policy must be carefully reviewed by Curatorial and Registration staff with respect to cost and risk to the Museum as well as estimated frequency of the display of the object. Commitments to accept loans for an indefinite period must be approved by the Director.

Occasionally, property of other museums is received and held for a brief period, usually while objects are in transit. This is a rare occurrence. The Whitney must obtain proof of insurance and waiver of subrogation in these cases.

DEACCESSIONING

The Museum may, from time to time, deem it necessary to deaccession objects from the Museum's collections. In considering deaccessioning objects or groups of objects, the Museum must be ever aware of its role as steward of the collection for the benefit of the public. Objects are acquired for permanent retention in the collection and not with the thought of disposal. The act of deaccessioning artworks from the Museum's collection must be done with exceptional care, reflect museum policy, and preserve the integrity of the collection. Deaccessioning should be carried out with at least the same degree of prudence as is exercised in acquisitions.

General Policy

Objects in the Whitney's collection should be retained permanently if the work continues to be useful to the purposes and activities of the Museum, if they continue to contribute to the integrity of the collection, and if they can be properly stored, preserved, and used. Objects may be deaccessioned when the above conditions no longer exist, or if it is determined that such action would ultimately improve or refine the collection upon compliance with all legal requirements.

Recommendation of Curator

Each object being considered for deaccessioning must meet certain criteria, as evidenced by the written recommendation by the appropriate curator(s) to the Director and the Curatorial Committee, based upon one or more of the following:

- The object is not relevant to or consistent with the Museum's purposes and activities.
- The object no longer retains its physical integrity, its identity, or its authenticity as demonstrated by a conservator's report or curatorial research.
- The object is an unnecessary duplicate of others in the collection, including objects that are repetitive of similar themes in a similar medium.
- The object cannot be adequately cared for in a professionally acceptable manner.
- Removal of the object, under specified circumstances, would ultimately improve or refine the collection.

Compliance with Legal Requirements:

- Objects must be deaccessioned strictly in accordance

with legal requirements. Legal compliance will be the responsibility of the General Counsel.

- The Museum must determine that it holds clear legal title to any object considered for deaccession.
- Any mandatory restrictions on the disposition of objects (including those imposed by the donor or by law) will be determined and strictly observed. Similarly, if the objects were acquired by Museum funds that were restricted as to their use, such restrictions shall again apply to any proceeds received upon the sale of the objects. While precatory requests (i.e., nonbinding preferences of donors) should be taken into account where possible, such requests need not be followed if it is not in the best interest of the Museum to do so.
- A living donor or living artist should be notified in writing by the Museum, whenever possible, if an object is to be deaccessioned.
- If the work was acquired within the past twenty-five years, the curator shall use reasonable efforts (for example, museum records and/or online research) to identify any heirs of a donor. If the heirs can be located, the Museum should provide written notice to the heirs.

Disposition of Deaccessioned Works

The manner of disposition should be in the best interests of the Museum, as determined by the Director in consultation with the curator, taking into account other factors such as interests of the public, audiences, and the scholarly and cultural communities it serves.

Unless the Director and curator specifically determines that an alternative means of disposition is preferable, all dispositions shall be by auction, and the primary objective shall be to obtain the best possible price for the object being sold.

Consideration may be given to placing objects in another institution where they may serve a similar purpose to that for which they were originally acquired by the Museum.

In the case of works by a living artist, the Museum will communicate with the artist about exchanging the work for a more desirable one or by selling the work and applying the proceeds to the acquisition of a more desirable work.

In the event that the Director and curator specifically determines that a disposition other than by sale

is appropriate, they shall specifically determine and implement the alternative means of disposition agreed upon. This may include witnessed destruction when a work is damaged beyond repair and is of no use for study or teaching purposes.

Summary of Approvals

The curator will present a formal deaccession proposal at a Curatorial Committee meeting, identifying the appropriate deaccession criteria for the object as well as the nature and manner of the proposed disposition. A written deaccession proposal will also include the approval of the Director. The vote of the Curatorial Committee shall be included in the minutes of the meeting.

Next, the Committee on Collections will be presented with a proposal for deaccessioning for their review and approval.

If the deaccession is approved by the Committee on Collections, the information will be included in the minutes and forwarded to the Board of Trustees or Executive Committee for approval, and to the Museum's Collections Management department for the permanent records of the collection.

The final authority to deaccession rests with the Board of Trustees or Executive Committee acting on the recommendation of the Committee on Collections.

Use of Deaccession Funds for Direct Care

All funds received from the sale of deaccessioned artworks, including all earnings and appreciation of Deaccession Funds, shall be used to fund the acquisition of other works (or commission of works in accordance with AAMD policy) or for Direct Care

of the collection as described below.

For purposes of this policy, and in accordance with Rule 25 of the AAMD's Professional Practices, the expenditures for Direct Care refer to "the direct costs associated with the storage or preservation of works of art. Such direct costs include, for example, those for (i) conservation and restoration treatments (including packing and transportation for such conservation or restoration) and (ii) materials required for storage of all classifications of works of art, such as acid-free paper, folders, matboard, frames, mounts, and digital media migration. Funds received from the disposal of a deaccessioned work of art shall not be used for operations or capital expenses except as provided above. Direct Care does not include (a) salaries of staff or (b) costs incurred for the sole purpose of temporary exhibition display." Additionally, per the AAMD's guidance in its FAQs, Direct Care does not include costs that can be capitalized or costs of rent.

The Whitney's Deputy Director (or designated representative) will confirm that any proposed expenditures for Direct Care complies with this policy and any applicable accounting guidance. The identification of categories of Direct Care expenses for which deaccession funds may be used shall be reviewed by a committee consisting of the Chief Curator; Chief Exhibitions and Collection Officer; and the Deputy Director (or their respective senior staff designees).

INVENTORY

The Museum undertakes periodic, comprehensive inventories of the collection as well as spot-check inventories. The Museum seeks to accomplish a complete inventory of the collection approximately every ten years. For spot-check inventories, fewer than ten works per month are chosen at random for location confirmation. The Registration department completes an annual inventory of all objects in the collection valued at \$2,500,000 and above.

RISK MANAGEMENT, SAFETY, AND SECURITY

A review will be done at least once every three years to best determine how to insure—under one blanket fine arts policy—both the Museum’s collection and property borrowed from others.

Coverage limits for the blanket fine arts policy are reviewed at least once every three years by the Director with the Board of Trustees. Historically, the collection is not insured for full value per standard museum practice.

The Chief Exhibitions and Collection Officer and the Head Registrar negotiate and administer the blanket fine arts policy and arrange for modifications such as temporary excess coverage, as required during the life of the policy.

As the Museum insures its collection under a blanket fine arts policy, it will, in order to manage its resources, charge borrowers a pro rata amount for insurance. Exceptions for special circumstances will be considered (loans to earthquake regions, reciprocal loans, loans to selected government agencies or offices, selected foreign indemnities).

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

The Museum will have in place a disaster preparedness plan that anticipates needs that may arise from damage to the collection, which might be caused by a range of emergencies. The emergencies that will be addressed in the plan are floods and leaks, fire, electrical power interruptions, biological infestations, structural or mechanical failures, or vandalism. Thus, the plan will anticipate necessary responses to any of these conditions in the main building, at the offsite storage location, and at any associated site in order to reduce or eliminate potential damage.

ART HANDLING

Proper procedures for handling specific kinds of objects must be respected and enforced without exception. Adequate training and informed supervision by knowledgeable staff are both imperative. Those authorized to handle art objects are conservators, art handlers, storage manager(s), cataloguers, and, if necessary, others in the Collections, Exhibitions, and Curatorial departments. However, if trained art handlers are available, others should not handle art objects except in emergencies when objects are in danger of loss, damage, or destruction.

Safe and proper installation and removal of art objects requires thorough planning and communication among the departments involved, including Registration, Curatorial, Art Handling, Conservation, Exhibitions, and Facilities. The following are essential to object preservation: appropriate installation materials; all equipment required for safe moving and handling available and in good condition; an adequate number of prepared, trained staff; qualified outside assistance if necessary; sufficient scheduling for installation and deinstallation; and adequate funding for the safe handling and presentation of objects. Shortcuts jeopardize object safety, cause damage to the building, and can result in serious injuries to staff and others in the vicinity of an object during or after installation or removal. Installation design must integrate professional preventive conservation, as determined in discussions with the Conservation department and security standards. The safety of art objects and human beings always takes priority over aesthetic considerations when compromises must be made. This policy applies to owned and borrowed works.

Registration and Security staff carry out routine exhibition checks and make a verbal and written Incident Report if an object is missing or seems to have changed in appearance. Written reports are distributed to the Director; Deputy Director; Chief Operating Officer; Chief Curator; Director of Collections; Chief Exhibitions and Collection Officer; Director of Conservation; Director, Exhibition & Collection Production; Head Registrar, Exhibitions; Head Registrar, Permanent Collection; appropriate curator(s); and the registrar in charge of an exhibition if an exhibition loan. A registrar or art handler—or, if not available, a representative of the responsible

department—is called to the scene immediately should an object be reported missing or damaged and a conservator must be called to assess the nature and extent of any damage.

ACCESS

As a public institution, the Museum strives to provide the public reasonable access to the collection, taking into account staff availability and the security, safety, and conservation of the objects. Requests for access to the collection not on public display will be honored where appropriate and coordinated through the Registration department. Requests from the press must be reviewed in advance by the Communications department.

External Requests for Access

All external requests must be made in writing and the purpose or project must be described. Appointments are honored for the applicant only. No unexpected person is allowed to accompany the cleared visitor. Appointments to see collection objects require a minimum of one month's notice and are scheduled for appropriate lengths

of time. Appointments to see objects in the Library's Special Collection are made by contacting the Library.

Internal Requests for Access

Staff members who wish to gain access to Museum storage areas are asked to make appointments with the Registration department for access to the collection or to works being considered for acquisition. Objects may only be handled by trained staff but may not be moved within storage or removed from storage except in the presence of a Registration staff member.

STUDY COLLECTIONS

Materials in the Archive, Library, and the Library's Special Collection are not part of the Whitney's collection. These objects differ from works in the collection in that their use is deemed to be primarily for study purposes. Should the Museum receive a loan request for the exhibition of any of these materials, the Registration department will process the request in the same manner as loans of work from the Museum's collection.