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## **Fine and Decorative Arts: Books and Periodicals (Class N and sections of Classes G, T, and Z)**

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### **I. Scope**

This Collections Policy Statement (CPS) refers to monographs and serials which contribute to research in the fine arts and the decorative arts. Fine arts consist of theory, techniques, history, and criticism of architecture, sculpture, drawing, painting, and prints. Decorative and applied arts consist of theory, technique, history, and criticism of objects and areas of study such as furniture, fiber, ceramics, silver and metalwork, and personal items such as clothing and jewelry. This CPS does not address the acquisition of non-text formats such as fine prints, posters, reproductions, artists' drawings, and architectural drawings which are housed in the Prints and Photographs Division and are covered in the Fine and Decorative Arts: Non-Book Materials Collections Policy Statement. A Collections Overview for Fine Arts and another for Decorative Arts are also available.

Many divisions own two or three-dimensional objects that could be considered fine or decorative arts objects. In some cases these objects are acquired as part of a larger collection. All of these two and three-dimensional items and objects should be managed under the guidance of the CPSs and policies of the division having custody of the objects.

Fine Arts as defined in the Library of Congress classification scheme class N includes painting, drawing, sculpture, architecture and decorative arts. Portions of class Z6000 and Z7000 also apply to these arts. Materials are selected and retained in the following formats: books, serials, microforms, and electronic media including "born digital" items.

The broad class categories of class N are as follows:

- N Visual Arts General including the History of Art
- NA Architecture
- NB Sculpture
- NC Drawing, Design, Illustration
- ND Painting
- NE Print Media
- NK Decorative Arts, Applied Arts, Decoration and Ornament

NX Arts in General comprising material dealing with 2 or more of the arts in broadest sense; also includes other subjects such as funding for the arts.

Other broad class categories of classes of decorative arts materials include:

GT for costumes, manners and customs

GV (select sub-classes) for collectibles.

TS manufactures

TT handicrafts, furniture, clothing construction, home arts

TX (select sub-classes) household economics

## II. Research Strengths

The Library's collections of fine arts monographs and serials are unrivaled in their breadth primarily because of Copyright deposit and exchange agreements with other institutions. Due to the comprehensive nature of its holdings on American culture, the Library of Congress is uniquely able to support interdisciplinary research in numerous aspects of American fine and decorative arts. The general book and serial collections are supplemented by extensive holdings of doctoral dissertations, microform collections related to art such as collections of auction catalogs, and online, often full-text, sources. The General Collections and the Prints and Photographs Division are the two principal locations for both Fine Arts and Decorative Arts materials. Other divisions, including Asian, African and Middle Eastern, and Rare Book and Special Collections, also contain material related to Fine and Decorative Arts.

The Fine and Decorative Arts collections in the Library of Congress have developed over time and are the natural outgrowth of the nucleus of materials included in Thomas Jefferson's library. Jefferson, who could be described as a Renaissance man, was interested in most aspects of human endeavor. He was known for his interest in the applied and mechanical arts that would be known today as the decorative arts. The theory and practice of architecture was also of particular importance to Thomas Jefferson, who was himself an architect, and who was always concerned with improving buildings and grounds. For this reason, Jefferson's library, included several seminal architectural treatises by eminent architects from antiquity (Vitruvius), the Renaissance (Palladio, Serlio, Vignola, Alberti), and from Britain (Inigo Jones and James Gibbs). In addition, Jefferson was interested in applied (or decorative) arts topics. Among his collections were Chippendale's *Gentleman and Cabinet makers Director*; Chambers *Chinese Designs*; *The Builder's Dictionary, or the Gentleman and Architect's Companion*; and *James on Gardening* which includes information about garden ornamentation. Jefferson was also inquisitive about the fine arts. Various treatises on the theory of painting and the visual arts, and various works containing biographies of artists reflect Jefferson's interest in this field.

Doctoral dissertations from U.S. institutions are collected comprehensively. The Digital Dissertations database supports electronic indexing to the historical fiche collection and full-text access to U.S. dissertations since the early 1990s. Also included in this database are masters theses from institutions with significant art programs such as Winterthur at the University of Delaware. Foreign dissertations in the field of arts are acquired on a selective basis by Recommending Officers for the Fine and Decorative Arts. Exhibit catalogs in both the Fine and Decorative Arts are acquired on a comprehensive level. However, exhibit catalogs issued by commercial galleries and smaller art museums are collected on a selective basis. In many cases exhibition catalogs on Decorative Arts topics are the most representative publications about unusual objects, collections, or collectors.

Electronic resources to which the Library of Congress subscribes cover a broad range of topics applicable to the study of Fine and Decorative Arts. Due to the broad nature of the topics, many databases, both general and specific, include valuable information related to these fields. Databases and electronic resources that are frequently consulted, and that comprise invaluable resources for the study of fine and decorative arts sources include: *ProQuest Digital Dissertations*, *Art Index*, *Art Index Retrospective*, *Artifact*, *Bibliography on the History of Art (BHA)*, *Design and Applied Arts Index (DAAI)*, *Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals*, *Arts & Humanities Citation Index*, *Index to 19<sup>th</sup> Century Art Periodicals*, and numerous other applicable titles. Some titles offer both current and retrospective coverage, and many provide full-text coverage.

American Memory provides free and open access through the Internet to written and spoken words, sound recordings, still and moving images, prints, maps, and sheet music that document the American experience. It is a digital record of U.S. history and creativity, and as such includes many art-related materials and information. These materials, from the collections of the Library of Congress and other institutions, chronicle historical events, people, places, and ideas that continue to shape the United States, serving the public as a resource for education and lifelong learning.

### III. Collecting Policy

Overall, the Library collects at Collecting Levels 4 or 5 for the fine and decorative arts. Material relating to all aspects of American art and specific art forms and media (e.g. prints, graphic design and illustration) approaches a more comprehensive level (Level 5). For non-book materials see also the Fine and Applied Arts: Non-Book Materials and Photography Collections Policy Statements.

Most material on photography from an aesthetic and technical perspective is found in class TR (see CPS Science and Technology: Chemical Engineering Group and CPS Photography). In addition, most material dealing with the creation and fabrication of decorative objects (i.e. silver, clocks, pottery, etc.) will be found in various T sub-classes (see CPS Science and Technology: Composite). Materials on costume and clothing are found in the GT sub-class. Most material on Native-American art and culture will be found in classes E and F.

Museum, exhibit, and auction catalogs constitute a unique resource for study in the history of art. The Library of Congress collects exhibition and museum catalogs from larger museums on a comprehensive basis. Museum and exhibition catalogs are collected on a global basis. The collections of auction catalogs are comprehensive only for very few of the largest American auction houses such as Sotheby's and Christies, and a few European auction houses. Acquisition of catalogs from smaller and additional auction houses would significantly strengthen Library of Congress holdings in this important area. To supplement auction catalogs the Library currently subscribes to databases that include information on auction records such as *Artifact* and *SCIPIO*.

Efforts are made to avoid the acquisition of repetitive and derivative works offering virtually no new information, including those consisting primarily of illustrations already available in other published sources. Additionally, "do-it-yourself" publications and other books for teaching purposes are acquired on a selective basis except for books on handicrafts, needlework, sewing, and related materials. As of 2007 craft brochures that are comprised of handicraft directions for one or two projects, have no implicit research value, and are usually printed as a double-sided booklet are set aside and reviewed on an annual basis so that a representative sample can be added to the collections.

The Copyright Best Edition statement provides guidance for selecting materials for the fine arts and decorative arts collections.

#### IV. Acquisitions Sources: Current and Future

The majority of materials added to the collections on fine and decorative arts in the United States are gained through copyright deposit. Materials for other countries are acquired through a number of sources, including blanket approval plan dealers, LC Overseas Offices, and exchange. The Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Division is another acquisition source. In addition, the Recommending Officers for Fine and for Decorative Arts peruse publisher's catalogs as well as exhibition catalogs in print and online formats. Listservs available through organizations such as the College Art Association, the Consortium of Art and Architecture Historians, and the Art Libraries Society of North America provide an invaluable source for identifying new and older titles. In addition, bibliographies for classes taught at local institutions are provided by local instructors. Online resources provided by book dealers such as Casalini Libri and Touzot are used for identification and acquisition of fine and decorative arts materials, as are databases and e-journals.

#### V. Collecting Levels

The following section details some specific collecting levels for class N (Fine and Applied Arts). Collecting Levels are defined in the Acquisitions section of the LC home page. When two numbers appear, the first refers to materials relating to the U.S.; the second to other areas of the world.

| LC Classification |                                       | Collecting Level |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|
| N                 | Visual arts, including history of art | 4                |
| N5300             | General Histories                     | 4                |
| N5310             | Prehistoric Art                       | 5                |
| N5350             | Egyptian Art                          | 5                |
| N5630-N5790       | Classical Art                         | 5                |
| N6000-N6318       | Medieval, Islamic Art                 | 5                |
| N6502             | Latin America                         | 5                |
| N6502.57-N6538    | American Art                          | 5                |
| N7800-N7840       | Early Christian                       | 5                |
| NA                | Architecture                          | 4                |
| NA707-NA712       | American Architecture                 | 5                |
| NA2695-NA2793     | Architectural Drawing and Design      | 5                |
| NA7100-NA7884     | Domestic Architecture                 | 5                |

|               |                                                  |     |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----|
| NB            | Sculpture                                        | 5/4 |
| NC            | Drawing, design, illustration                    | 4   |
| NC845-NC915   | Graphic Art Material                             | 5   |
| NC950-NC996   | Illustration                                     | 5   |
| NC1280-NC1284 | Printed ephemera                                 | 5   |
| NC1300-NC1766 | Pictorial humor, caricature                      | 5   |
| NC1800-NC1850 | Posters                                          | 5   |
| ND            | Painting                                         | 5/4 |
| ND2889-ND3416 | Illumination of manuscripts and books            | 5   |
| NE            | Print Media                                      | 5/4 |
| NK            | Decorative Arts                                  | 5   |
| NK1-NK1678    | History, movements, decoration and ornament      | 5   |
| NK1700-NK3496 | Interior decoration, furnishings, rugs           | 5   |
| NK3600-NK9955 | Other arts and industries, ceramics, glass       | 5   |
| NX            | Arts in general                                  | 4   |
| GT1-GT420     | Manners and Customs; household arts              | 5   |
| GT500-GT2370  | Costumes, fashion                                | 5   |
| GT2600-GT3913 | Customs                                          | 5   |
| TS            | Manufactures                                     | 5   |
| TS538-TS999   | Metalworking, jewelry, millwork, paper, textiles | 5   |
| TT            | Handicrafts, arts & crafts, handwork, painting   | 5   |
| TX1-TX340     | Home economics                                   | 5   |
| Z             | Subject bibliographies                           | 5   |

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