

Fine and Applied Arts – Non-book Materials (Graphic Arts)

Contents

- I. Scope
- II. Research Strengths
- III. Collecting Policy
 - A. Fine prints
 - B. Posters
 - C. Artists' drawings
 - D. Architectural drawings and documentation
 - E. Popular and applied graphic art
- IV. Acquisition Sources: Current and Future
- V. Collecting Levels

I. Scope

This statement includes graphic arts materials in non-book formats, e.g., drawings and prints, including posters and non-reproductive digital works, as detailed in the Collecting Policy guidelines below. For books and periodicals, see the Fine and Decorative Arts - Books and Periodicals Collections Policy Statement.

The graphic art collections represent the diversity of the American people and their disparate interests.

The Library of Congress makes every effort not to duplicate the collecting efforts of other local institutions, including the Smithsonian Institution and all of its museums, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, The Phillips Collection, the National Gallery of Art, and the Historical Society of Washington DC.

Paintings, sculptures, and other three-dimensional works of art are not acquired except under the special conditions described in the Non-library Materials Supplementary Guideline or on a case-by-case basis. The Library of Congress does not acquire commercial art reproductions, including slides and posters relating directly to the materials and artists represented in the Prints and Photographs Division, except when comparable high-quality material is not available in book or other collected format. When a work of art is originally produced in a non-digital format, the Library of Congress generally will not accept digital reproductions.

II. Research Strengths

The Library of Congress supports scholars engaging in research on the graphic arts; the history of visual communication and expression from the 15th century to the current day; using graphic arts to document American creative, cultural, and intellectual achievement; and seeking visual content related to almost every Library of Congress collecting policy. Ranging from

documentary to fine art works, the areas of topical strength in the graphic arts collections are: the history of American architecture; fine and popular arts; the history of graphic design and communication; prominent artists; documentary aspects of American politics and government, cultural events and social movements; and the history of propaganda and political art.

In its capacity as an international research library, the Library collects prints and drawings that support the Library's area studies collections and document subjects of global and international interests; foreign events, individuals and trends impacting or affecting American history, achievements and concerns; and provide insight on matters of American interests, influence and concern abroad.

III. Collecting Policy

A. Fine prints

1. The Library of Congress selectively acquires artists' original woodcuts, engravings, etchings, lithographs, and other types of original prints of the highest caliber that build upon and complement strengths or fill important gaps in the Library's existing Fine Prints Collection. Single works as well as prints in collections, groups, and series (including artists' portfolios) are collected. Every effort is made not to duplicate the acquisition efforts of other local institutions.

2. International in scope, the Library's Fine Prints Collection includes works created from the 15th century to the present day with particular emphasis on prints produced in the United States since 1870. In special instances efforts may be made to acquire the complete oeuvre of printmakers for whom the Library's holdings are particularly outstanding, e.g., American printmaker and illustrator Joseph Pennell (1857-1926), American architect turned printmaker John Taylor Arms (1887-1953), and African-American printmaker and founder of the Printmaking Workshop Robert Blackburn (1920-2003).

3. Comparable to its efforts to collect non-visual works of creative prose, poetry, and music, the Library seeks to include in its collections artists' prints that compellingly blend artistry, technique, and subject matter. Visual content can include representational, figurative, and/or abstract imagery. Primacy is given to artists, subjects, and art movements that have had or potentially will have an impact on printmaking in the United States.

4. Acquisitions of foreign fine art prints seek to support research collections and interests of the Library's Area Studies divisions and build on such extant strengths as prints by Japanese, European, and Central and South American creators.

5. Current or growing strengths include works by a diversity of American creators including African American, Latino (including Chicano), and women artists, particularly working in or after the 20th century. Contemporary prints have been actively collected from the 1930s forward. Among notable artists for whom the Library has substantial holdings are Albrecht Dürer (German, 1471-1528), Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn (Dutch, 1606-1669), James McNeill Whistler (American but based in England, 1834-1903), Mary Cassatt (American born, but based in France, 1844-1926), Joseph Pennell (American, 1857-1926), George Bellows (American, 1882-1925), John Taylor Arms (American, 1887-1953), Reginald Marsh (American, 1898-1954), and Robert Blackburn (American, 1920-2003). Notable subject strengths include Italian Renaissance and Baroque chiaroscuro woodcuts; French and British prints; American prints, especially 19th century works, including: Etching Revival, WPA/FAP, African American Harmon Foundation (1930s and 1940s), Social Realist and American Scene/ Regionalist, Abstract

Expressionist; and narrative and issue-driven prints related to such topics as history, politics, health, civil rights, and the environment.

B. Posters

1. The Library acquires selected posters illustrative of political, military, social, economic, industrial and cultural history, including advertising and propaganda, with priority given to documentation of the United States life and history.
2. Posters that are examples of the work of major artists, with priority given to work of United States origin, are sought.
3. The Library acquires comprehensively the motion picture posters submitted for copyright, augmented by select movie posters, lobby cards, and related materials representing blockbusters, cultural trends, and independent films, motion pictures representing the diversity of the American people, movies with trendsetting special effects, and outstanding examples of genre films. New acquisitions complement the already significant and comprehensive holdings that begin with depictions of the earliest presentations of the motion picture, to serial versions and feature-length silent films and talkies through the emergence of the movie star and the rise of the great Hollywood studios.
4. The Library seeks works illustrative of the history of the poster as an art form and as a medium of communication.
5. The Library collects foreign posters that support the research collections and interests of the Library's area studies divisions.
6. The Library will acquire digitally distributed posters that fit into the above categories when no hard-copy poster is published.

C. Artists' drawings

1. The Library selectively collects fine, representative examples of preparatory studies, sketches, and finished drawings prepared for illustrations in American books and magazines that enrich the Library's existing graphic arts collections.
2. Selected drawings that support and are related to the Library's existing collections of fine and historical prints and posters are sought. These include drawings by major printmakers represented in the Library's collections and drawings executed in preparation for or closely relating to prints and posters in the collections.
3. The Library selectively collects drawings for American political and social cartoons and caricatures as documents of public opinion and of the history of visual satire and propaganda. Drawings for foreign political cartoons and caricature drawings of personalities of international prominence will be acquired selectively as documents of the comparative history of visual satire and propaganda. This includes, but is not limited to, political illustration, comic strips, sports cartoons, gag cartoons, comic book illustrations, and caricatures.
4. The Library seeks to document American political, economic and social history through topographical drawings of a scenographic character and other drawings of documentary value

as records of American historical events and American urban and rural buildings, structures, and scenery.

5. The Library will not acquire drawings for portraits of American public figures that duplicate the efforts of the National Portrait Gallery. The Library collects drawings of American public figures associated with major court trials.

D. Architectural and engineering drawings and documentation

1. The Library acquires selected original drawings by significant or potentially significant American architects, designers and planners that serve as primary research materials for the study of architecture in the United States, its territories and possessions. The Library will not normally collect detailed engineering drawings, or the entire output of an architect's office. It does attempt to build a documentary collection of drawings and related materials showing the history, monuments, and achievements of architecture and civil engineering in the United States. The emphasis will be on buildings other than those erected by the Federal government, since the National Archives and Records Administration is responsible for the building records of the majority of these structures.

2. In attempting to document the history of architecture, design and engineering, the Library seeks selected measured drawings, photographs, and other documentation of existing, lost and, in some cases, unexecuted buildings; characteristic building types and technologies; historic structures; and the work of notable architects, craftsmen, engineers, landscape architects, urban planners and interior designers active in the United States. These materials include, but are not limited to, the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) / Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) / Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS). The Library does not attempt, in general, to build large collections of original engineering or technical drawings, blueprints and specifications. The Library, rather, attempts to coordinate its acquisitions in the field of historic engineering with those of the National Museum of American History in order to avoid duplication.

3. In building a collection of materials associated with the built environment, the Library considers for acquisition selected drawings, photographs, and other documentation of buildings or sites outside the United States representing particular designers, techniques, building types and styles, technical or design innovations, etc., that have had notable impact on work in the United States or were influenced by work in this country.

4. Materials relating to foreign buildings and sites that substantially strengthen or supplement the existing holdings of the Library, or fill notable gaps in the Library's record of the history of architecture in all countries are acquired.

5. For Western architecture before 1800, the Library attempts to coordinate its acquisitions with those of the National Gallery of Art in order to avoid duplication. Similarly, the Library works with the Dumbarton Oaks Library to avoid duplication in the field of garden and landscape architecture.

6. In general, the Library does not endeavor to build large collections of original architectural drawings, blueprints and specifications relating to the construction and building trades, as these fall within the scope of the collections of the National Building Museum.

7. The Library, as part of its work towards the Cooperative Preservation of Architectural Records (COPAR), encourages the placement of archives of limited subject or geographical

interest in appropriate regional collections. The Library collects information about such holdings and, where possible, microform copies of the same.

E. Popular and applied graphic art

1. Particular emphasis is placed on the acquisition of prints that are important pictorial records of the people, history, and culture of the United States and of its present and former territories and possessions. These include views of American buildings, cities, urban and rural sites, people, and events or personalities whose work is of significance or of special importance to the history of the United States, and are acquired on a selective basis.

2. The Library acquires on a selective basis important examples of the ornamental and functional uses of the graphic arts in the United States. The types of materials include, but are not limited to, illustrated sheet music, baseball cards, advertising labels, postcards, trading cards and bank-note engravings. Outstanding examples of foreign works in these categories will be acquired if they can be shown to have influenced developments in or were significantly influenced by American illustration and graphic design.

3. The Library collects foreign prints of historical significance that support the research interests and collections of the Library's various area studies divisions.

4. Works which are of strictly local significance are considered the province of regional repositories. The Library attempts to direct such works to the appropriate institutions.

5. Collections, in most cases, are confined to individually issued prints or series of prints, as distinct from those originally included in books or periodicals. Every effort is made to collect across the spectrum of popular printmaking: woodcuts and wood-engravings, etchings and engravings, lithographs and chromolithographs, and silkscreens, as well as photomechanically and digitally produced prints.

6. In acquiring examples of popular and applied graphic arts, the holdings of other institutions in the Washington area are to be taken into account so that duplication is generally, though not necessarily, avoided. For example, the Library takes care when acquiring portraits of American statesmen and public figures to not duplicate the efforts of the National Portrait Gallery.

7. The Library acquires on a comprehensive basis American and foreign political satires, allegories, and caricatures and other types of political prints from the Reformation period to the present.

IV. Acquisitions Sources

Graphic arts materials will be collected to support the Mission of the Library of Congress across the broad spectrum of its collecting areas. The Library will accept gifts and make purchases of those items which qualify as the best edition of works of art on paper available, both published and unpublished, regardless of fragility or wear and tear due to use and age, if they qualify based on the Specific Collecting Policy Guidelines above. The Copyright Office states its *Best Edition* of Published Copyrighted Works for the Collections of the Library of Congress, Circular 7b. While this establishes the ideal practice, in reality most copyrighted Visual Arts works are submitted in a reproductive format as permitted in circular 40a *Deposit Requirements for Registration of Claims to Copyright in Visual Arts Material* which is outside the scope of the

graphic arts collections of the Library of Congress. The Library of Congress does not limit to copyright deposit the means by which it acquires graphic arts in order to fulfill its mission.

Increasingly, graphic arts are produced digitally both by file and web site. Artists are beginning to make their works available online. The Library makes every attempt to collect visual materials in the most widely accepted format, e.g. tif, jpeg, and pdf, in order to decrease issues in accessibility for future generations. The Prints and Photographs Division has already been participating in web archiving activities in anticipation of the day when more of our acquisitions work is done online. Nevertheless, the Library excludes those materials that are reproductions in digital format of those works published originally as drawings or prints.

V. Collecting Levels

The Library of Congress acquires graphic arts selectively within each category as described in the Specific Collecting Policy Guidelines above. Acquisition is determined by the visual content of the work offered to the Library for gift or purchase, desire not to duplicate the collecting efforts of other local institutions, attempt to fill in gaps in existing holdings, efforts not to replicate existing Library of Congress collections, and the financial cost to the Library in accepting works of art, whether it be financial, spatial, or other. Level 3

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