



**V&A Collections Development Policy  
Including Acquisition & Disposal Policy**

Victoria & Albert Museum  
South Kensington,  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) is the world's leading museum of art and design. It holds the national collections<sup>1</sup> of textiles, fashion, furniture and woodwork, post-classical sculpture to 1914, jewellery, metalwork (including silver), ceramics and glass, architectural drawings, British watercolours and drawings, pastels, portrait miniatures, commercial graphics (including posters), computer art, the art of photography, and the art of the book. It also holds the national collections of childhood and the performing arts, and world-class collections of Asian art. In January 2010, the collection consisted of 2,742,809 objects.

As the national museum of art and design, the V&A takes a lead in attempts to ensure that public collections acquire key heritage objects that would otherwise be exported. The Museum also acquires historical objects which add to the overall understanding of our existing collections or challenge established understandings of a particular period, style or artist/designer's work, focusing on the history, provenance, documentation and individual quality of acquisitions. A major focus of the Museum's collecting is the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. The V&A reaffirms its commitment to respond to changes in technology and design practice, and to embrace in its collecting the changing social contexts which have been the focus of much design innovation.

Each of the five collections departments and the Museum of Childhood has an active collecting plan. All work together on issues relating to contemporary collecting.

### Asian Collections

The Asian Collections of the V&A are world-renowned, spanning the wealth and diversity of artistic creativity across the continent from 3,500 BC until the present day. The collections are remarkable for their range of media; particular strengths include ceramics from China and the Middle East, textiles from China, South Asia and the Middle East and lacquer and prints from Japan. We continue to build and develop the collections by acquiring securely-provenanced objects illustrating the history of art and design throughout Asia. For the post-1900 period the Asian Department works in close collaboration with the Museum's Western Departments in all spheres where designers are active in international arenas.

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<sup>1</sup> For the full list of national collections see Appendix 3. As curators of national collections, senior members of all Departments have responsibilities to act formally as Expert Advisors to the Government's Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art, to offer expert advice to the Capital Tax Office of H M Revenue & Customs and other national bodies and to represent the Museum on a range of professional committees. These obligations are summarised in Appendix 3.

### Furniture, Textiles & Fashion Collections

The Western Furniture and Woodwork collections date from the medieval period to current times and are unique in their international scope, in contrast to the national collections of most countries, which concentrate primarily on the productions of the home country. However, our greatest strength lies in the holdings of British furniture made between 1700 and 1900. The Textile collection is the world's largest and the most wide-ranging of its kind, covering all parts of the world. The bulk of the collection, however, extends in date from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD to the present day, while geographically it concentrates on Western Europe. Since the 1960s curators of the now-combined Department that deals with furniture and domestic textiles have increasingly concentrated on the study of furnishing and interior design, and the choice of items for acquisition has reflected these interests rather than the narrower connoisseurship of objects that had characterized earlier scholarship. The Fashion collection is the premier collection in the UK and consists of European (mainly French and English) fashionable clothes and accessories for both sexes. High quality 18<sup>th</sup> - and 19<sup>th</sup>-century fashion remains a priority but our primary emphasis is on contemporary material, especially the development of technologically advanced fabrics and their use in the fashion industry.

### Sculpture, Metalwork Ceramics & Glass Collections

The Western Sculpture collection is the most comprehensive holding of post-classical European sculpture in the world. The Metalwork collection contains over 45,000 examples of decorative metalwork, silver and jewellery ranging in date from the Bronze Age to the present day. It includes the national collection of English silver. The Ceramics collection is without parallel in the world and, by virtue of its size, quality and range, may be considered pre-eminent in its entirety. The Glass collection is the most comprehensive in Europe, and the stained glass holdings are unparalleled anywhere. There are many links between sculpture and the decorative arts, and the amalgamation of three collections into the Sculpture, Metalwork, Ceramics & Glass Department offers the chance to revisit past priorities – while continuing to fill gaps in the historic collections – and to place additional emphasis on collecting the contemporary across the collections.

### Word & Image Collections

The Word & Image collections encompass design, drawings, paintings, prints, photography and the art of the book, and aim to represent the design process from conception to consumption. They provide a national centre for primary source material for the study of design. The Design collection has no national rivals for historical material except in respect of architectural drawings, where the holdings complement those of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), which since 2004 has been curated at the V&A. The collection of 19<sup>th</sup>-century British oil paintings, which includes the principal collection of John Constable, is second only to that of Tate, and foreign oil paintings are also of national significance. The Museum has the national responsibility for collecting watercolours and English portrait miniatures. The Photography collection is international and spans the whole history of the subject from 1839 to the present. The Prints collection, uniquely in Britain, embraces 'fine' prints and commercial production. It is one of the world's foremost collections of printed designs for the decorative arts. Prints in their

original frames and portfolios are also collected and preserved. Holdings of the art, craft and design of the book encompass every aspect of the book from illuminated manuscripts to paperbacks.

The Word & Image Department focuses its collecting on the areas in which it has national responsibilities and established strengths. Historic collecting continues to prioritize British work. Contemporary production is a priority in all relevant fields, equal weight being given to 'high' design and popular culture. Digital media represent a current challenge. Conscious of the Museum's role as the national museum of art and design, the Department is especially active in areas where the fine and applied arts intersect.

### Childhood Collections

The V&A Museum of Childhood (MoC) contains outstanding childhood collections. They include: dolls' houses, games, toys, dolls, puppets, social history, ephemera, children's clothing, childcare and furniture – objects dating back to the sixteenth century to today. There are over 100,000 objects in the MoC collections and collections of international significance include: Dolls, Children's Clothing, Dolls Houses, Furniture and Games & Puzzles.

The Museum is very rich in the 'Play' areas of the collection and will restrict its collecting in these areas with the exception of key 'must have' objects. Its collecting priorities will focus on social history, visual arts, material relating to older children, contemporary objects and collecting for specific temporary exhibitions.

### Theatre & Performance Collections

The Theatre & Performance Collections are dedicated to the history, craft and practice of the performing arts in the UK. Its primary emphasis is on drama, dance, opera and musical theatre. In providing the national record of performance, it combines the functions of archive, library and educational resource. Since live performance is ephemeral, the department documents its production and reception by gathering a variety of evidence in different media. Since 1992, for example, the department has made archival recordings of current theatre productions under a unique agreement with the Federation of Entertainment Unions. It will seek to make contemporary and 20<sup>th</sup>-century collecting a priority by collecting graphic, photographic, video and audio material relating to the performing arts and, selectively, designs, models, costumes, archives, theatre architecture/stage technology and library materials.



## INTRODUCTION

The V&A Acquisitions and Disposals Policy (approved at the meeting of the Board of Trustees and adopted in July 1989, amended, approved and adopted by the Board on 17 September 2009) is an integral part of the Museum's overall Collections Management Policy. The Acquisitions and Disposals Policy (2009) is intended as a public document for the information of Government, Museum staff, and other interested parties, such as other museums and grant-giving and funding bodies. It describes the criteria on which material is selected including limitations of chronology and object type. It also spells out the legal framework within which the Museum operates and the legal obligations of the Board of Trustees. Finally, it describes the rules governing de-accessioning. The Acquisitions and Disposals Policy appears as the first appendix of this document.

In late 2001, the Museum re-organised the nine collections Departments at South Kensington into four major Departments – three Western Departments (Furniture, Textiles and Fashion, Sculpture, Metalwork, Ceramics & Glass, and Word & Image), and a single Asian Department, embracing the arts of the whole of Asia, including the Middle East. In 2008, a fifth department, the Theatre & Performance Department, was created at South Kensington following the closure of the V&A Theatre Museum at Covent Garden. These Departments, along with the Museum of Childhood at Bethnal Green, are together responsible for building the Museum's collections.

Acquisitions remain the heart blood of the V&A. The amalgamation of the South Kensington Departments, the refocusing of the Museum's activities through the FuturePlan and the public programme, have all reinvigorated the work of the collecting Departments, and encouraged the development of new perspectives and a reassessment of collecting plans. In recent years, exhibitions have played a greater role in our collecting activities; focused research by our curators leads to the identification and discovery of many new and important acquisitions for the collection.

As the national museum of art and design the V&A takes a lead in attempts to ensure that public collections acquire key heritage objects that would otherwise be exported from the UK. The Museum will also continue to acquire historical objects which add to the overall understanding of our existing collections or challenge established understandings of a particular period, style or artist/designer's work.

A major focus of the Museum's collecting is, however, the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. The V&A has a long and distinguished history of collecting and exhibiting objects that form a history of design. We reaffirm our commitment to respond to changes in technology and design practice, and to embrace in our collecting the changing and diverse social contexts which have been the focus of much design innovation. In doing this we also aim to ensure that our collections embrace the artistic and design heritage of our diverse audiences.



The following document<sup>2</sup> briefly describes the collections in order to clarify current plans for acquiring further objects for the Museum's collections. Each collecting Department and the Museum of Childhood looks in turn at the scope, history and standing of its collection, and its collecting aims. Section 7 looks more broadly at issues relating to contemporary collecting, and the importance of intra- and inter-departmental working. Section 8 outlines the past, present and future collecting aims of the V&A in relation to Africa. Appendices look at the implications of long-term borrowing for building the collections and detail the numerical and relative strengths of parts of each collection, and their priority in terms of active collecting.

Research on new objects and publishing related information, in both traditional and electronic media, is an essential part of responsible collecting. The Museum is committed to making all its collections publicly available, through display in its own galleries, via its library, study rooms and other reference facilities, and through short and long-term loans and exhibitions<sup>3</sup>, both throughout the UK and internationally. Continuing initiatives to make the collections available in the UK regions and via the V&A website include the 'Search the Collections' database which aims to make available images and explanatory text for all objects in the collection. There are also a number of externally funded collaborative projects<sup>4</sup>. Over 1 million records<sup>5</sup> are available online at the time of writing, and the Museum aims to build on the number and quality of records online, adding 65,000 new object records by 2015. We will also steadily increase the number of images online, reaching over 350,000 by 2015.

The V&A is a member of the International Council of Museums and of the Museums Association of the United Kingdom, and hence is guided by their respective codes, which outline ethical constraints such as rules prohibiting the acquisition of illicitly traded material.

Objects enter the Museum in a variety of ways – by gift, bequest, in lieu of tax, exchange, commission and purchase. The financial position of the Museum, and its ability to raise funds from individuals, the public, through arrangements in lieu of duties, and especially from grant-making bodies, is therefore of particular importance in the realistic construction of any collecting plan. In recent times, despite significant financial constraints, we have acquired ca. 2,000 objects a year, significantly strengthening many aspects of the collections. We owe thanks to The Art Fund, the Friends of the V&A, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the National

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<sup>2</sup> This document now supersedes the Museum's 1993 and 2004 Collecting Plans.

<sup>3</sup> In financial year 2009-2010, the V&A lent 881 objects to 127 short term exhibitions held in 148 venues all over the world which attracted 2,793,728 visitors. In addition, 1668 objects were on long term loan to 164 venues both in the UK and abroad.

<sup>4</sup> The African collections at the V&A were given new prominence by the African Diaspora research project, which was part of the wider Capacity Building and Cultural Ownership funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2005–8. The project identified 4300 objects including material of great quality and richness and much of the resulting research is published on the V&A website.

<sup>5</sup> 1,029,084 objects and 116,867 object records with at least one image were available as of 3 February 2010.

Heritage Memorial Fund. We are also immensely grateful to numerous individuals for their generosity thanks to which the V&A can retain its position as an international centre of excellence.

Mark Jones  
Director

March 2010

### **Further Reading**

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## 1. ASIAN DEPARTMENT

### 1.1. Scope, history, standing and collecting

The Asian Department was created in 2001 by bringing together the Indian and South-East Asian and East Asian collections with the Museum's holdings of material from the Middle East, giving the Museum a coherent strategy for all its Asian collections for the first time in its history. The scope of these collections is extremely broad chronologically, geographically and in terms of media. The collections include paintings in oil, watercolour and ink on canvas, paper and cloth; prints and photography; sculpture and carvings in stone, metal, wood, ivory, jade and other hardstones, metalwork and jewellery; arms and armour; dress, textiles and carpets; ceramics and glass; furniture and lacquer. The process of drawing together the Museum's collections from the Middle East, Islamic Central Asia, North Africa and Islamic Spain is still underway and when fully assembled the Asian Collections will encompass over 140,000 objects.

The cultures of Asia, whose peoples today represent over 60% of the world's population, are of great historical depth. At different times and in different ways they have both influenced and been influenced by Western art and culture. Today, Asia is undergoing rapid change and is of great economic, political and cultural significance and this is reflected in the Museum's collections. The V&A's world-class Asian collections, together with those of institutions such as the British Museum and the British Library, make London the most important centre for the appreciation and study of Asian art and archaeology outside the countries of origin. The Museum therefore has an important role to play in helping to interpret both historical and contemporary Asian artistic, design and cultural traditions to a growing and changing audience of national and international visitors.

The V&A's particular strengths lie in the decorative arts and design history, complementing the archaeological focus and numismatic strengths of the British Museum, and the British Library's focus on manuscripts and the printed book. There is considerable consultation with other institutions in London and throughout the UK, as we continue to build our collections with a national framework in mind.

We aim to continue to build and develop our Asian collections by acquiring securely-provenanced objects illustrating and documenting the history of art, and design throughout Asia. In all spheres where designers are active in international arenas, we work in consultation and collaboration with the Museum's other curatorial departments.

#### 1.1.1. South and South-East Asia

The collections from the South Asian subcontinent (India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) range from ca.2,000 BC to the present and number ca. 60,000 objects. The Museum also holds

rich collections from most regions of South-East Asia (Burma, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Indonesia, ca. 3,500 objects) and from the Himalayan region (Sikkim, Bhutan, Nepal and Tibet ca. 1,500 objects).

The collection of Mughal court arts includes some of the most important pieces in the world and the collection of South Asian textiles (ca.10,000 items) is the largest and most important outside the region itself. The collections of South Asian paintings and works on paper (ca. 5,000) and sculpture (ca. 5,000) are, along with those of the British Library and the British Museum respectively, among the finest in the Western World. The V&A's distinctive strengths also include furniture (ca. 300), musical instruments (ca. 200) and objects relating to the performing arts. The collection is strong in metalwork and decorative arts of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, especially items made for exhibition purposes, but does not comprehensively cover earlier periods. The Museum has smaller collections of 20<sup>th</sup>-century and contemporary material, with works by 20<sup>th</sup> - and 21<sup>st</sup>-century artists, (both artists based in the Indian subcontinent and artists of South Asian origin working in the UK) and a significant holding of 20<sup>th</sup>-century and contemporary Indian film posters – a genre which is important to an understanding of the modern and contemporary visual world of South Asia.

In addition to the ca. 60,000 objects from South Asia already cited, the collection of 19<sup>th</sup>-century (predominantly architectural site) photographs of South Asia, (ca. 20,000 prints and a large collection of negatives) along with photographic documentation of items of Indian art elsewhere in the V&A, is now recognized to be of high value.

From South-East Asia, the V&A holds a significant collection of 19<sup>th</sup>-century material from Burma (Myanmar) and further strengths include a good collection of textiles and the UK's most important collections of early sculptures from Indonesia, Thailand, Burma and Cambodia, and of metalwork from mainland South-East Asia.

The Himalayan consists primarily of sculpture, *tangkas* (painted scrolls), and ritual and domestic vessels, but also includes important items of dress, personal ornament, arms and armour.

The South and South-East Asian collections originated in the Museum of the East India Company. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the 'India Museum' was transferred to the newly established India Office and its broadly based historical collections were developed with a particular focus on arts, manufactures, and economic products, largely through acquisitions from international exhibitions. By the 1870s they included an unrivalled assemblage of then contemporary decorative arts from all of what was then considered 'Greater India', i.e. those areas of South-East Asia and the Himalayan regions that had historically been influenced by India, or which were governed by British India. In 1880 the old India Museum was dispersed, and its decorative arts and historical collections were brought together in South Kensington with the decorative art collections that had been developed at the South Kensington Museum.

When the V&A's collections were rationalised in 1909 and divided into material-based collections and departments, these collections continued to be known as the 'India Museum'. A new appreciation of early Indian art forms and religious traditions, led to the serious collecting of Hindu, Buddhist and Jain sculpture and of Indian painting in the 1910s and 20s. This continued in a substantial manner in the 1930s, 40s and 50s under the Department's Keepers, K de Burgh Codrington and W B Archer. In the mid-1950s, the old 'India Museum' was demolished, and the collection's displays, now much reduced in scale, were moved to the main South Kensington site, but the broad pattern of collecting both historical and contemporary sculpture, painting and the decorative arts and design has continued since that date.

In the case of the South Asian historical collections, we aim to acquire selective examples of sculpture of the Gupta and medieval periods and court art from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century, as well as paintings from both religious and secular traditions, early examples of South Asian textiles (including trade textiles), types of 18<sup>th</sup> - and 19<sup>th</sup>-century furniture and metalwork and objects made for everyday use. With regard to South-East Asia we aim to consolidate our holdings of sculpture, painted works and textiles. We also hope to strengthen the Himalayan collection by the judicious addition of examples of early painting (12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> centuries) and sculpture, and of early 20<sup>th</sup>-century textiles which represent the traditional culture of the region.

In the case of post-1900 works, we aim to increase our South Asian holdings in all media to reflect changes in society, technology and the use of raw materials. In the sphere of paintings, drawings and prints we will continue to work closely with the British Museum in the acquisition of works that reflect more indigenous traditions and with the V&A's Western collections with regard to the work of artists whose approach is more self-consciously international. The Department also intends to collaborate with South Asian institutions and individuals to develop its collection of contemporary handloom/hand-dyed/hand-printed textiles from the traditional and modern design arenas by purchase and commission. Recent years have also seen the rapid development of a South Asian fashion industry, much of it based on a revival and elaboration of indigenous types of dress. We aim to collect and document key examples of modern and contemporary clothing, fashion and textiles. We also aim to acquire examples of craft and product design relating to the domestic interior. We plan to focus on the major strengths of our South-East Asian and Himalayan collections by acquiring selective examples of contemporary paintings, hand-crafted textiles and decorative arts material.

#### 1.1.2. East Asia

The collections from East Asia consist of ca. 65,100 items from China, Japan and Korea. They include objects from China (ca. 16,000 items) ranging from archaeological material of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC to 21<sup>st</sup>-century items, Japanese material (ca. 48,500 items) primarily from the 16<sup>th</sup> century to the present, and Korean material (ca. 600 items) from the Silla period (400-600 AD) to the present.

The Museum has collected material from the East Asia since its inception. Important donations and bequests during the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, coupled with determined scholarship and collecting by individual curators, led to major strengths. These included acquisitions from the Salting, Eumorfopoulos, Hildburgh, Alexander and Le Blond collections; and the curatorial achievements of Rackham, W B Honey and John Ayers in the fields of Chinese and Korean ceramics, and G Wingfield Digby for Japanese textiles.

The East Asian collections were assembled from the materials-based departments of the Museum in 1970. They encompass the largest and most extensive museum collection of East Asian ceramics (totalling ca. 9,000 items), and East Asian furniture and textiles (over 4,000) in the UK, while the collections of Chinese export art and Japanese prints (over 30,000), *inro* (ca. 570 items) and lacquer (ca. 2,000 items) are among the finest in the western world.

Further strengths are Chinese metalwork and carvings (ca. 1,500 items), Japanese *netsuke* (ca. 860 items) and swords and sword fittings (over 5,000 items). In the case of Korea, the V&A, in common with other institutions, had made no attempt to acquire Korean artefacts systematically. This continued to be the case until recently – one acquisition or so per year over the period 1920-1990 was the norm. The Korean collection is thus smaller in scale (ca. 700 items) than the Chinese and Japanese collections, but is strong in textiles and furniture, ceramics, metalwork and lacquer-ware.

Since 1980, there has been a consistent focus on modern and contemporary collecting. Twentieth century Chinese artefacts have been collected in a conscious effort to map the period and now constitute an impressive group perhaps unmatched outside China. Contemporary Japanese crafts, which the Museum has been collecting actively since the late 1980s, are another particular strength.

In the case of East Asia we continue to collect historical material selectively to augment and enrich our existing collections and to allow for the rotation of sensitive material such as Chinese painting and calligraphy. At the time of writing, we are in the process of developing through acquisition the most extensive museum collection of Japanese cloisonné enamels in the world.

In the modern and contemporary sphere, with regard to Japan, we work with the material-based departments of the Museum to collect the products of Japanese designers active in international arenas such as fashion, graphics and interior design. We particularly concentrate our own collecting on Japanese dress and Japanese studio crafts. With the display opportunities presented by the Samsung Gallery, we aim to continue the past two decades' focus by concentrating our Korean acquisitions on contemporary Korean crafts in a traditional idiom, particularly focusing on textiles and dress, ceramics, lacquer, metalwork and paper. For China, we aim to demonstrate 20<sup>th</sup> - and 21<sup>st</sup> -century design traditions by acquiring objects that develop historical crafts already represented in the V&A collections, particularly in the sphere of dress and graphic arts.

### 1.1.3 Middle East

The V&A holds over 10,000 items from the Middle East in the Islamic period, excluding the collection of ceramic sherds. Until 2002, when staff with relevant expertise were appointed to the Asian Department, this world-class collection remained divided among the Museum's materials-based departments. Transfer of the Middle Eastern collections to the Asian Department's care has been carried out in tandem with gallery development projects and is now well under way.

The importance of the V&A collection in the field of Islamic art from the Middle East lies partly in its size and quality but also in the early date at which the collecting process began. The V&A was the first institution in the world to form a systematic and purposeful collection of Islamic art, the founders of the Museum seeing it as a key source for the reform of British design. Objects were first acquired by purchase from the European market and then, from the 1860s, by purchase from international expositions and by sending agents into the field. The foundation of the outstanding Iranian collections, for example, was the acquiring of pieces for the Museum by Sir Robert Murdoch Smith in Iran in the 1870s. The Museum also received major bequests from private collectors such as Captain W.J. Myers and George Salting. The last significant spate of acquisitions was made in the 1980s, when major items, particularly of ceramics, were acquired at auction.

The date range of the collection begins with the rise of Islam in the 7th century. A programme of activities in 20th-century and contemporary art and design from the Middle East has now begun to address the need to build 20th and 21st century collections. The V&A's collections are strongest in their representation of Iran, Turkey, Egypt, Syria and Iraq, but also include objects from Spain under Muslim rule, North Africa (Morocco to Libya), the Caucasus republics, and Afghanistan and the former Soviet Central Asia, most notably Uzbekistan. The collections include holdings of ceramics, textiles, metalwork and woodwork that are remarkable for their size and range. The ceramics collection is internationally the most important and comprehensive of its kind (3,500 objects and ca. 8,000 sherds). It is particularly strong in Iranian wares and tiles of all countries. The textiles collection is of equally substantial range and importance (ca. 3,600 items). It includes most famously the huge 16th century carpet from the shrine at Ardabil in Iran. The metalwork collection, which includes vessels, jewellery, and arms and armour, is also of world importance. The woodwork collection has areas of significance such as Mamluk carved wood. There are also smaller but significant collections of carving in ivory, rock crystal and stone, which include the unrivalled Fatimid rock crystal ewer.

The process of drawing together the Museum's collections from the Middle East, Islamic Central Asia, North Africa and Islamic Spain is still under way.

At the same time, we are making judicious acquisitions in areas not adequately represented in the V&A collections. Anticipating future gallery developments we have recently acquired figurative qalamkari textiles from Iran. Other collecting priorities are becoming apparent as the



transfer of collections progresses: we have a good collection of metalwork from the 13th to 16th centuries and of Iranian metalwork of later periods, for example, but our coverage of earlier metalwork and more recent non-Iranian metalwork is poor.

Until recently, the Museum had no examples of 20th-century material from the Middle East. We are therefore beginning to collect Middle Eastern 20th-century and contemporary works, working with colleagues in the V&A's western departments and with other national and regional institutions. Major ceramics items are being acquired in liaison with the V&A's Ceramics and Glass section and the Middle Eastern Department in the British Museum. A major initiative in the contemporary field has been the Jameel Prize for contemporary work inspired by Islamic tradition, first awarded in July 2009. Collecting contemporary photography from the Middle East has been stimulated by collaborative acquisitions realised in cooperation with the Photography section of the V&A's Word and Image Department and the British Museum, generously funded by The Art Fund.

## 1.2. Further Reading

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## 2. FURNITURE, TEXTILES AND FASHION DEPARTMENT

### 2.1. Scope, history, standing and collecting

The Furniture, Textiles and Fashion Department was formed in 2001 by the amalgamation of the two former departments of Furniture and Woodwork and Textiles and Dress. The Department holds 65,878 objects.

Since the 1960s curators of the now-combined department have increasingly concentrated on the study of furnishing and interior design, and the choice of items for acquisition has reflected these interests rather than the narrower connoisseurship of objects that had characterized earlier scholarship. Objects for acquisition are selected with special emphasis on their history and provenance as well as their individual quality as examples of high-style design and manufacture or craftsmanship. As cataloguing and review of the collections for new Museum projects continues, shortcomings in certain historic collections are noted. Future projects in the Department will involve not only investigation and interpretation of aspects of the existing combined collections but also new initiatives, including the study of contemporary interiors. New ideas are still developing on collecting and reflecting contemporary fashion, including digital forms of documentation in addition to, or in certain instances in place of, tangible acquisitions. The Online Museum has been a particularly valuable means to disseminate information about the collections and special exhibitions with the creation of dedicated micro-sites. It also provides opportunities to create links to other fashion collections and stream live events such as London Fashion Week.

Certain aspects of the collections, including such items as architectural woodwork and period rooms, carriages, musical instruments, textile tools and equipment, and regional dress, are substantially closed collections, though acquisitions might be made of exceptionally fine and well-provenanced examples should they come on the market or be offered as gifts. Other aspects of the collections, such as early textiles or 18<sup>th</sup>-century furniture from North America with particular relationship to the British tradition, are effectively closed because of the rarity and high cost of suitable examples but, given the opportunity, exceptional pieces might be acquired.

#### 2.1.1 Furniture and Woodwork

The Furniture and Woodwork collection contains nearly 13,000 objects, dating from the medieval period to current times. Most are from Europe or from areas influenced by the European tradition. Although furniture dominates, there are also substantial holdings of interior architectural woodwork and smaller, though important, holdings of musical instruments, leather, treen and papier-mâché. The collecting of clocks is shared with the Metalwork collection, reflecting the V&A's interest in case design rather than technical design

(which is the province of the British Museum). Historically, we have held many Islamic objects but these are currently in the process of being transferred to the Asian Department.

The geographical and chronological range of the collection is unique. However, our greatest strength lies in the holdings of British furniture made between 1700 and 1900. Our international 20<sup>th</sup>-century holdings are uneven but are rivalled by perhaps only one other institution (the Vitra Design Museum). They are extensively used by students and scholars. In certain areas, the numbers of objects may be small but include particularly rich examples, as of 18<sup>th</sup>-century furniture from the German states and 15<sup>th</sup>-century Italian furniture. Considerations of space must always inform acquisition and it is for this reason that certain types of furniture (e.g. beds, large bookcases, office furniture, or extensive sets of furniture) may only be represented by a few examples in the collection. The question of acquiring 18<sup>th</sup>-century or earlier furniture made in North America did not arise until recent years and consequently we hold almost no items of this date and provenance. Furniture from South America, Australia and New Zealand is also scarce, and furniture from African states (except a few items of Islamic North African) has not been collected.

Although Western furniture is now seen as the core of the Furniture and Woodwork collection, it originated (as did most collections in the Museum) in the purchase of fine examples of woodworking techniques/craftsmanship for the Government Schools of Design at Somerset House in the 1840s. The earliest acquisitions, of contemporary French parquetry and carving from the Paris Exhibition of 1844, were typical of the kind of material acquired in the first 20 years of the Museum's life. Though historic pieces were acquired from 1848 onwards, the emphasis for acquisitions of all dates was on technical excellence and the value of such pieces as examples for current practitioners. Purchases included European and Asian woodwork of all kinds, with lacquer and carving particularly strongly represented. It was the Great Exhibition of 1851 that prompted the acquisition of contemporary furniture, both British and from continental Europe, but again, technical virtuosity was the prime criterion for selection.

A powerful tool in the development of the Furniture and Woodwork collection in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the acquisition of complete personal collections. Amongst the largest of these were the Soulages Collection of Italian and French Renaissance objects (acquired between 1859 and 1865) and the Jones Collection of 18<sup>th</sup>-century decorative arts (bequeathed in 1882). Such additions continued in the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the Bettine, Lady Abingdon Collection of 24 pieces or pairs of French Empire furniture, bequeathed by Mrs T R P Hole in 1986, being the most recent.

From the 1880s onwards the preference for highly decorated Continental furniture and woodwork gradually gave way to a developing taste for English furniture made before the 19<sup>th</sup> century. At the same time, the interest in contemporary furniture waned, as the fashion for antique collecting gripped the middle classes. From this time, for more than a generation, the Museum concentrated on acquiring British furniture of the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. It was in this period (1890-1930) that the Museum acquired many of its period rooms. In the early 20<sup>th</sup>

century these became a popular aspect of the displays and continue to be so in the new British Galleries. Given the greater protection for historic interiors in recent years, it is unlikely that the Museum would ever acquire another period room, though the possibility should not be ruled out and, indeed, an exceptional interior by Frank Lloyd Wright (the Kaufmann office) was acquired by gift in 1974 and was displayed between 1992 and 2005.

Contemporary collecting, which had formed such an important aspect of the Museum's collecting in its early years, was almost entirely abandoned in 1909. The long series of acquisitions from international exhibitions in the 19<sup>th</sup> century had culminated in the presentation by Sir George Donaldson of a number of pieces of Art Nouveau furniture shown at the 1900 Exhibition in Paris, as mentioned above. This unfortunately generated a great deal of criticism, and contemporary collecting was not taken up again systematically within the department until the 1960s, although some pieces had been courageously collected by the Circulation Department as early as the 1920s and 1930s and were distributed to the appropriate material-based departments when Circulation was disbanded in 1977. Currently, collecting of contemporary material is a strong priority.

The collection of Furniture and Woodwork is recognized as the most comprehensive in the world. Unlike most national collections (rich as many are), the V&A has historically collected items from a wide range of countries and thus offers a unique opportunity for comparative study. Staff in the collection exercise expertise in British and European furniture from the Medieval period to the 19<sup>th</sup> century and internationally in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and in the field of contemporary furniture across an international spectrum.

Although the collection is designated as the National Collection, we recognize its place as part of the wider national collection held in museums, houses, churches and public buildings throughout the UK. The V&A has always encouraged other institutions in the UK to develop particular collections of furniture and woodwork and the Department continues this tradition. We maintain active relationships with staff in regional museums and those working for other organisations (such as English Heritage and The National Trust) who are responsible for other collections of national and international importance. Certain public institutions, notably the Wallace Collection, Temple Newsam House, Leeds, the Lady Lever Art Gallery (National Museums Liverpool) and the Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle, hold important collections of a particular date or origin that complement those of the V&A. However, none of these museums offers the wide range of furniture that makes the collection at the V&A pre-eminent.

It has generally been the case that the interests of other bodies have mainly been in British furniture and largely (certainly until recently) pieces made before 1900. Whereas some institutions, such as Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum (for Cotswold furniture) and, more widely, the Arts and Crafts movement), the Judges' Lodgings, Lancaster (for pieces by Gillows), acquire objects representing the history of their own local craft or industry, many other areas and aspects of production are neglected, with regional museums having to adopt ever more selective collecting policies. As a result of this the V&A has had to take a particularly active role

in many different areas to ensure that national collections are as representative as possible of high design from all major centres.

In the past, some items have been acquired with the specific intention of returning them on loan or by transfer to other institutions. In the case of furniture, examples include the Mary of Modena bed, now shown at Kensington Palace, and the giltwood table designed by Vardy, now shown in Spencer House, London, together with the suite of chairs designed by him for the Painted Room there. With the work on the new British Galleries came a long-awaited chance to lend back to Sizergh Castle (National Trust) the late 16<sup>th</sup>-century panelling sold from the house in 1891 and, most recently, a bed from Boughton House, given by the Duke of Buccleuch in 1916, has been returned on loan. The allocation to the V&A of furniture under the AIL scheme, with agreement for its retention in situ, has brought furnishings at Longleat and Houghton into the collection in recent years, with the furniture remaining in situ but on loan.

Our aim is to develop and enrich the established areas of the collection of Furniture and Woodwork, covering primarily Western furniture and woodwork made between the Medieval period and the present day. We would like to enlarge our holdings of high-style furnishings showing the influence of the European, and especially the British, tradition from all areas of the world not covered by the holdings of the Asian Department. The collecting of 20<sup>th</sup> - and 21<sup>st</sup>-century material will be a particular priority, as will items for use in gallery displays, and in particular for the gallery of the materials and techniques of furniture, when it opens in 2012, will present Western traditions alongside those of Asia.

#### 2.1.2. Textiles

The Textile collection is the world's largest and the most wide-ranging of its kind. The joint collections of Textiles and Dress contain almost 53,090 items, or sets of items, of which over two-thirds are textiles and just under one third dress items. Although some fragments of Greek embroidery date from the late 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, the bulk of the Textile collection extends in date from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD to the present day, while geographically it concentrates on Western Europe. Previously, it included about 3,600 textiles from the Middle East which are in the process of being transferred to the Asian Department. The Textile collection is classified according to technique, within the broad categories of woven, printed, embroidered, lace, etc; it is further divided chronologically and geographically. Many of these groups are remarkable for their variety and comprehensiveness, and the collection of about 24,000 British textiles is the finest in the world.

The Museum's Textile collection began with the formation of study collections for the Government Schools of Design in 1842. As that collection grew, there was a revival of interest in historical patterns and in their potential for adaptation, and so, when the Museum was founded in 1852, it began to acquire medieval textiles, many of which had survived in the form of vestments. There was also intense interest in the manufacture of lace and attempts were made in several countries to revive the lace industries in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Museum

responded by acquiring and exhibiting many fine examples. Although contemporary woven and printed textiles were acquired from the Great Exhibition of 1851 and the Paris Exhibitions of 1855 and 1867, the initial emphasis was on acquiring pre-19<sup>th</sup>-century material, possibly because it was thought that contemporary textiles did not conform to the principles of 'good design'. The Museum showed little interest in contemporary embroidery, probably reflecting its original concern with the manufacturing industries rather than with craft.

Apart from individual purchases, gifts and bequests, many important and large collections of historic textiles were acquired, notably 500 medieval textiles from the Bock collection (1863), 450 16<sup>th</sup> - and 17<sup>th</sup>-century textiles from the Forrer collection (1877), 62 18<sup>th</sup>-century Greek embroideries from the Wace collection (1919) and 700 18<sup>th</sup>-century Greek and Turkish embroideries from the Dawkins collection (1950). From the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the 1930s the Museum made an effort to collect textiles from the period 1600-1750. English domestic embroidery from the 17<sup>th</sup> century is well represented and includes large furnishings as well as small, exquisite items of dress. The collection of Continental textiles from the 17<sup>th</sup> century is large and extraordinarily varied.

In more recent times, re-organization of the British Textile Industry led to the acquisition of major collections of 18<sup>th</sup>- , 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-century textiles from leading UK manufacturers including the following collections: Warners (1972 and subsequently – 1,215 textiles and pattern books), Mortons/Courtaulds (1977 – 87 textiles), Hull Traders (1989 – 73 textiles), The Wilton Royal Carpet Factory (1992 – 157 samples), Heals (1999 – about 1,150 lengths of furnishing) and Courtaulds (2001 – an archive of over 6,000 items covering a wide range of manufacturers and dates). Contemporary collecting, which had an erratic early history, was almost entirely abandoned in 1909 when it became the responsibility of the Circulation Department until that department was disbanded in 1977, when the Textiles collection once again resumed contemporary collecting and inherited the Textiles Collections formed by the Circulation Department. In 1934 the collections of the British Institute of Industrial Art were acquired by the Museum. The Institute had collected contemporary textiles on an annual basis from 1919 to 1932 and the Museum undertook to continue the tradition by collecting those textiles which were judged to be the best of each year's international production. In this way an extensive and unique collection of 20<sup>th</sup>-century textiles of both industrial and craft production has been formed to complement the historical collection. In 1979 and 2002 many fabric samples previously held in the Manchester Design Registry were acquired, to enhance the collection of early 20<sup>th</sup>-century textiles. The Textile collection is the world's largest and most wide-ranging assemblage of such material.

The Textile collection is designated as the National Collection. Like the Furniture and Woodwork collection, it differs from many fine and well-established national collections in Europe in terms of its international coverage over a wide-ranging historical period, as detailed above. As with the Furniture and Woodwork collection, its designation as a National Collection is taken as representing also a support role for the many smaller collections of textiles held by museums throughout Britain which are important elements in the wider national collections.



In recent years, the decline of both expertise and active collecting in regional museums has presented particular problems for this Department as for others in the V&A. Although some regional collections, such as the Macclesfield Silk Museum and the Paisley Museum, make strenuous efforts to develop their collections relating to local trades and industries, few regional museums (other than the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester) are able to maintain and develop collections of textiles with a wider scope, leaving the V&A with the responsibility for maintaining the breadth of the nation's collections.

### 2.1.3. Fashion

The Fashion collection is the premier collection in the UK and consists mainly of European (predominantly French and English) fashionable clothes and accessories for both sexes, with, additionally, 20<sup>th</sup> century holdings of American and Japanese fashion. The collection spans four centuries, with some rare pieces dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, though its strength lies in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and later. It has steadily developed in scholarly importance, while at the same time remaining one of the most popular collections with general visitors. Like the Textile collection, the Fashion collection has groups of objects which are important for their depth of coverage (such as 1930s evening wear, 1960s daywear, wedding dresses, 18<sup>th</sup>-century men's waistcoats, post-war couture, fashion dolls and shawls). The collection includes many outstanding items, including two magnificent mantuas from the 1740s, Worth evening gowns, a Charles James padded satin jacket of 1937, the seminal New Look suit, 'Bar', by Christian Dior and Vivienne Westwood's 'Boucher' dress and 'mock-croc' blue platform shoes.

Despite its current high profile, the Fashion collection had a less than auspicious start. The history of dress figured nowhere in the hierarchy of arts when the Museum was founded. It was not until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century that the discipline of dress studies became firmly established and not until 1957 that the first curator for fashion was appointed. Only in the later 1970s did the collecting of contemporary fashion and accessories come to be seen as a major responsibility of the Department.

Garments were acquired as early as the 1840s, but only if the textiles were considered significant. Gradually this approach changed and clothing was acquired for other reasons, such as fashionable cut and construction, provenance, rarity and the aesthetic appeal of the garment design. The collection developed slowly and in a sporadic fashion, chiefly by means of the gift, purchase or bequest of individual objects. Occasionally items came as part of collections of historical fashion, including accessories. These collections included the Brooke Collection (1864 and 1865 – 30 items of fashion and ca. 200 textiles), that of Sir Matthew and Lady Digby Wyatt (1876 – 124 fans), the Isham Collection (1900 – 31 items of dress and textiles), and the collections of Harrods (1913 – 1,442 items of dress) and Madame Tussauds (1977 – 15 items of dress). It was not until the 1960s that the Department began actively to collect 20<sup>th</sup>-century fashion, though individual items had been acquired from the 1930s. The 20<sup>th</sup>-century fashion collection grows around six major holdings: the Board of Trade Utility Collection (1942 – 34 items of dress), the

Heather Firbank Collection (1960 – 110 items of dress), the Cecil Beaton Collection (1971 – 1,200 items of dress), the collection formed in association with the exhibition *StreetStyle* (1993-1995 – 1,253 items of dress), the Jill Ritblat Collection (2000 – 459 items of dress) the Costiff Collection (2002 – 178 full outfits by Vivienne Westwood) and, most recently, the Mark Reed collection of menswear.

Given the enormous quantities of clothing generated annually by the fashion industry, it is possible only to acquire a limited selection of a designer's output. We work closely with other dress-collecting museums in Britain (approximately 100) to direct appropriate objects and collections to them. Fashion is a key aspect of the V&A's National-Regional partnerships and we look for opportunities to work with other museums with strong fashion and textiles collections to set up a programme of sharing skills, expertise and displays. In 2009 we worked as a consortium with the Museum of Costume at Bath and the Bowes Museum to acquire a group of Vionnet couture gowns which were the subject of an export stop (the first such for 20<sup>th</sup> century couture). Our aim is to use such partnerships and other initiatives of the V&A, such as the Collections Online programme, to make all the collections of the Department more accessible throughout the UK, as a means of encouraging and disseminating expertise in our fields of study.

The Fashion collection is designated as the National Collection. It is currently the largest and most comprehensive collection of dress in the world, only rivalled in the field of contemporary dress by the Costume Institute at the Metropolitan Museum in New York, the Musée de la Mode et du Textile, Paris, the Musée de la Mode de la Ville de Paris and the Kyoto Costume Institute in Japan (which has a concise but important collection) . In terms of material from 1600 to 1800, the V&A's collections are the largest anywhere and our collection of 20<sup>th</sup>-century sub-cultural fashion is unique in range and size.

We aim to develop the collection of British and other European textiles from 1850 to the present, and the collection of British, Continental and North American fashionable dress from the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the present, by acquiring pieces of superlative aesthetic quality, technical construction, and interesting provenance. The need to provide additional high quality items of 18<sup>th</sup> - and 19<sup>th</sup>-century fashion for display remains a priority if we are to maintain a comprehensive and educational display in the Dress Gallery, with regular rotation of exhibits.

Our primary emphasis however will be on contemporary material, including technologically advanced fabrics and their use in the fashion industry, acquisitions made for specific exhibitions or generated through Fashion in Motion (in particular London designers), emerging fashion centres such as Belgium and a broadening of acquisition policy to include ready to wear. Recently, work by designers for the high street (2005-2010) has been acquired as a discrete collection. Given the global, fast changing nature of twenty first century fashion, and the role of the internet these were, fittingly, acquired on e-bay.

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### **3. SCULPTURE, METALWORK, CERAMICS & GLASS DEPARTMENT**

#### **3.1. Scope, history, standing and collecting**

The Sculpture, Metalwork, Ceramics & Glass Department was formed in 2001 from the amalgamation of the former Departments of Sculpture, of Metalwork, and of Ceramics and Glass.

The tradition of collecting in these three areas is based on curatorial expertise, with the result that the Museum has often been able to make valuable additions in under-researched areas at low prices. The creation of the three collections stems from the organisational re-arrangement of the Museum in 1909; but there are many links between sculpture and the decorative arts, and their grouping together offers the chance to revisit past priorities – while continuing to fill gaps in the historic collections – and to place additional emphasis on collecting the contemporary across the collections. Acquisitions often have relevance to more than one of the collections.

FuturePlan gallery projects have impacted particularly on this Department over the last decade, and have provided opportunities to evaluate the strengths of the existing collections. Demonstrating the synergy between acquisition and display, the new ceramic galleries illustrate the importance of technical developments in ceramic history, with recent acquisitions reinforcing this important point. The creation of a new contemporary glass gallery has provided the opportunity to develop our collections in this area and to make more contacts with international practitioners in this field.

There is now a renewed emphasis on collecting the contemporary, as this is seen as an important way of inspiring further new work and attracting a wider range of audiences. This calls for the adoption of new ideas on ‘virtual’ collecting, for the documentation of innovative techniques in production, and of evidence of popular and commercial success where this is appropriate.

On occasion we will commission contemporary work both on a small scale (as with the seal of the Board of Trustees of the V&A, designed and made by Malcolm Appleby in 1985, and the presentation medal made by Felicity Powell in 2002-3) and on a larger scale as part of a new gallery display, as with the installation ‘Signs and Wonders’ by Edmund de Waal installed in the Ceramics Galleries in 2009. This was also the case with the ironwork gates by James Horrobin (1981-82) in the Ironwork Gallery, the Danny Lane glass staircase (1994) in the Glass Gallery and the stained glass in the Whiteley Silver Galleries. Key items are also occasionally borrowed, as in the case of the Chihuly chandelier in the Dome.

Certain collections, including the plaster casts and electrotype reproductions, are not actively developed, although acquisitions might still be made in these areas.

Relationships with both national and regional museums are being further strengthened in a variety of ways. Joint purchases – such as in the case of *The Three Graces* by Antonio Canova, bought in partnership with the National Galleries of Scotland in 1994 – is one such area of potential growth; and the expert advisers in the Department acts as ‘champions’ for export-stopped items, often encouraging and aiding other museums to acquire works of art in danger of being exported. Long-term loans in to the Museum, as with Tate loans to the Sculpture Galleries, may sometimes be seen as an alternative to purchase, and make the most of the nation’s holdings in different institutions.

### 3.1.1. Sculpture

The Sculpture collection is the most comprehensive holding of post-classical European sculpture in the world, containing over 17,000 objects. Since it was formed within an applied art museum, the V&A’s collection is much broader than those found in many art galleries, where sculpture often simply forms an adjunct to a paintings collection. The collection contains outstanding and numerous examples of medieval ivories and English medieval alabasters, and celebrated collections of Italian Renaissance and Baroque sculpture; it also extends to polychrome wood sculpture and small-scale boxwood statuettes, terracotta sculptors’ models, bronze statuettes and functional pieces, including ivory plaques for the adornment of book covers.

The chronological range of the collection is conditioned by the existence of the pre-eminent collections of classical sculpture at the British Museum and the holdings of post-1914 sculptures at Tate. With a small number of exceptions, therefore, the earliest pieces date from the beginnings of Christian art in around 300 AD and the latest to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The collection enjoys the status of a National Collection. Although certain categories of European post-classical sculpture are also to be found in the British Museum, the Wallace Collection and notable regional museums, nowhere else is the entire range of sculpture represented in such depth.

The earliest acquisition dates from 1844. Major landmarks in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century included the acquisition of the Gherardini Collection of sculptors’ models in 1854, sculpture from the Soulages Collection in 1856 and the Gigli-Campana Collection of Italian Sculpture in 1861. Numerous acquisitions made by J C Robinson in 1852-67 and the early 1880s created a collection of Italian sculpture that is unequalled outside Italy. The extensive collection of medieval ivories was established by the end of the 1860s through a series of purchases from the London dealer John Webb. The beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was marked by gifts of Romanesque and Gothic sculpture from J H Fitzhenry between 1906 and 1910, and the Salting Bequest greatly strengthened the holding of bronzes and ivories in 1910. Rodin’s gift of 18 of his sculptures in

1914 instantly established the Museum as a place of study for the artist's work. In 1916 the collection of architectural sculptures and plaster casts from the Royal Architectural Museum was transferred to the V&A. Dr W L Hildburgh was an outstanding benefactor to both the Sculpture and Metalwork collections: from 1915 until his death in 1955 he made numerous single gifts, but his greatest donation was his entire collection of over 260 English Medieval alabasters, given on his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1946.

We aim to acquire documented, signed and dated works of art that will enrich the most comprehensive holding of post-classical sculpture in the world. English sculpture and post-medieval ivories are two of the areas in which we especially seek appropriate additions. The collecting of 20<sup>th</sup>-century and contemporary sculpture is currently being re-assessed to reflect the Department's holdings in other areas. Although by agreement with Tate in 1983 we do not currently collect large-scale sculpture produced after 1914, we are actively adding to our collection of 20<sup>th</sup>-century and contemporary medals, and other small contemporary sculpture including ivories and bronzes. Discussions with Tate have taken place in connection with the display of post-1800 sculpture in both places: there is the expectation that the displays at South Kensington, Millbank and Bankside will continue to be considerably improved by a series of mutually-advantageous loans.

### 3.1.2. Metalwork

The Metalwork collection contains over 45,000 examples of decorative metalwork, silver and jewellery ranging in date from the Bronze Age to the present day. It includes the national collection of English silver, an outstandingly comprehensive jewellery gallery, and collections of ironwork, continental silver, arms and armour, medieval champlevé and late 19<sup>th</sup>-century enamels, brasswork, pewter and medieval metalwork of international importance. The pre-1800 German silver collection is the largest outside Germany. Long-term loans of British ecclesiastical silver have been encouraged since 1916 in order to illustrate this important aspect of the history of the craft.

European silver and ironwork were actively collected from the start, and outstanding purchases of both medieval and post-medieval objects were made at the sales of great collections, including those of Bernal, Soulages and Soltikoff (the Gloucester Candlestick and Eltenberg Reliquary). J C Robinson collected important examples of Spanish ecclesiastical silver in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and a rare group of medieval silver from the Basle Cathedral Treasury, sold by auction in 1836 was later bought by the Museum.

Much of the late 17<sup>th</sup> - and 18<sup>th</sup> -century British domestic silver entered the museum after 1900 as gifts and bequests from collectors; these include the Croft Lyons Collection of boxes, the Cropper Collection of bottle tickets, and Late Stuart and Early Georgian silver from C D Rotch.

The collections of jewellery and small work extend from tiaras to tie-pins, and gold watches to pomanders and watches (ca. 14,000 items). Purchases in the 19<sup>th</sup> century included

contemporary French jewellery bought in exhibitions in London and Paris, the Castellani Collection of Italian regional jewellery (1868) and the ring collection of the antiquary Edmund Waterton (1870). A superb collection of gemstones, including gems from the Hope Collection, was bequeathed in 1868 by the Reverend Chauncey Hare Townshend. Nearly 600 jewels were given by the scholar and collector Dame Joan Evans between 1933 and 1975. They date largely from before 1800, and complement the magnificent jewellery, mainly of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, bequeathed by Lady Cory in 1951. Since the 1970s, 20<sup>th</sup>-century and contemporary jewellery has been at the centre of acquisition policy, building on the foundations laid by the Circulation Department. A gift by Patricia Goldstein to the American Friends of the Victoria and Albert Museum in 2002 has greatly extended the range of work by leading jewellery houses in Europe and America.

We intend to acquire objects with documented designers, makers or patrons, and which incorporate innovative design or use of material. The English post-medieval silver collection is the largest and most representative in the world, but important additions are still made when appropriate. Adding to the collections of jewellery and gold boxes and watches by purchase and gift is a priority, and we actively collect contemporary silver and base metal.

### 3.1.3. Ceramics & Glass

The Ceramics & Glass collection contains ca. 80,000 objects, including ceramics and glass from the Western world, stained glass, post-medieval painted enamels on copper, and plastics. The holdings of European tin-glazed pottery, English ceramics 1600-1900, post-medieval glass, tiles, stained glass and 20<sup>th</sup>-century and contemporary international ceramics and glass are of such size and importance as to be internationally pre-eminent. The Ceramics collection alone is without parallel; by virtue of its size, quality and range it may be considered pre-eminent in its entirety. The Glass collection, now largely housed in the Glass Gallery, is the most comprehensive in Europe, and the stained glass holdings are unparalleled anywhere in the world.

From 1844, the earliest acquisitions focused on contemporary work and Renaissance wares with a 'fine art' emphasis. The French porcelain collections were strengthened by the Jones Bequest in 1882. The Schreiber Gift in 1884 laid the foundations for the outstanding collections of 18<sup>th</sup>-century English porcelain, bolstered by the transfer of objects from the Museum of Practical Geology in 1901. Maiolica and Renaissance and later painted Limoges enamels were strengthened by the Salting Bequest in 1910. The gift of the Wilfred Buckley Collection in 1936 transformed the holding of glass into one of leading international importance. The collections of stained glass, particularly of Medieval and Renaissance pieces, were augmented by the gifts and bequest (1900) of Henry Vaughan, followed by the Morgan Gift in 1919 and the gift of the Ashridge stained glass by E E Cook in 1928. Successive V&A exhibitions have led to acquisitions which make the V&A the first port of call for students and scholars. The resulting collections include the most comprehensive holdings of 20<sup>th</sup> century Scandinavian ceramics and glass, important ceramics by Lucie Rie, Hans Coper and Bernard Leach; by the designers Keith Murray



and Queensberry Hunt; and by potteries such as the Martin Brothers, Pilkington, Ruskin and Poole. The section has extremely strong holdings in contemporary work. The Glass collection has expanded considerably since the opening of the main Glass Gallery in 1994, with major additions of British, continental, antipodean and, especially, American glass art. The V&A is the only centre in this country for the study and enjoyment of this highly popular art form. Equally the V&A's holdings in contemporary British artist ceramics continue to grow steadily. Most major names are represented by important works, and the Museum maintains its long-held leading position in this highly competitive and active field. The redesign of the Ceramics Galleries in 2009-10 has encouraged collecting in contemporary ceramics and works illustrative of the creative process.

We aim to acquire documented historical pieces where they add to our already pre-eminent collection, and where opportunity and identified needs occur. Changing patterns in historical interpretation and Museum display – as, for example, in the British Galleries – may identify new 'needs'. We also plan to maintain our tradition of collecting modern and contemporary work to represent technical development and aesthetic fashions in design, to include both the innovative and the commercially successful. Collecting priorities include 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-century ceramics and glass, but we are most active in collecting the contemporary, both British and International.

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## 4. Word & Image Department

### 4.1. Scope, history, standing and collecting

The National Art Library (NAL) (including the Archive of Art and Design) together with the Museum Archives, and the Prints, Drawings, and Paintings Department were merged in 2001 to form the Word & Image Department (WID). The merged Department's collections encompass a wide range of Museum objects and literature on all the subjects covered by the Museum's collections: more than two million items overall. This plan concentrates on the collections as exemplars of art, craft and design. There is a separate *Policy for the development of the NAL's documentary materials* (See Appendix 6).

The NAL's collections began with the Schools of Design set up at Somerset House in 1837 to help improve the teaching of design. They moved to Marlborough House in 1852 and into the current suite of Reading Rooms on their completion in 1884 after occupying various locations in the Museum at South Kensington. The title 'National Art Library' first appeared around 1860 in the *Universal catalogue of books on art*, an early expression of the Library's ambition to provide a national centre for art documentation.

From the outset the NAL included prints and drawings, and by 1856 photographs. In 1909 prints and drawings were transferred to the curatorial Department of Engraving, Illustration and Design. Photographs followed much later, in 1977, when the Department's title became Prints, Drawings & Photographs. A separate Paintings Department was set up when the Museum opened at South Kensington in 1857. The Archive of Art and Design was established as part of the NAL in 1978 to assemble material already in the Museum, and to acquire archives associated with the production, marketing, promotion and study of British art and design.

Collecting, within the remit of this document, is carried out by five sections detailed below. British work is prioritised in all areas. The collections overlap with and complement many other collections nationally and internationally but are given distinctive meaning by their context. UK partnerships include the British Museum, the National Gallery, the National Portrait Gallery, Tate, and the National Media Museum with which we have entered into loan arrangements to maximise the value of the collections to the nation, and the National Archives which, as well as overseeing the management of public records at the V&A, disseminates information on its collections via the National Register of Archives. We also work with numerous smaller bodies with complementary collections, and outreach organisations.

The Department has responsibility for eight collections which have 'individual national status' (as defined by the provision of expertise and authoritative information, as well as the extent and/or significance of the collections themselves; see the *V&A Collections Management Policy*, 2009). These national collections are<sup>6</sup>:

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<sup>6</sup> Please see appendix 1 for a full list of national collections held by the V&A.

- Architectural Drawings
- Art of Photography
- British Watercolours and Drawings
- Commercial Graphics (including Posters)
- Computer Art
- National Art Library (the literature of art, craft and design/history and arts of the book)
- Pastels
- Portrait Miniatures

We continue to acquire historic material (especially in those areas where we have national responsibility), but in practice much of the Department's collecting activity is now focused on the 'contemporary' - that is, work by living artists and designers (often young or at an early stage in their careers), and with an emphasis on new media and technologies, new conceptual categories, and new object types, as well as topical material in traditional formats. The acquisition policy is essentially forward-looking, but it nevertheless builds on and extends the strengths of the existing collections in a manner appropriate to recent developments in art and design. The V&A's aim is to promote, support and develop the UK creative economy by inspiring designers and makers, and this is reflected in our collecting.

The contemporary field necessitates a joined-up approach to identifying, assessing and taking decisions on acquisitions, given the spread of expertise on things contemporary within the Department, and also the 'hybrid' or mixed media character of so much contemporary work which falls within the Department's remit. This joined-up thinking extends to other Collections. In the fields of photography, for example, Asia curators advise on and support relevant acquisitions by the Word & Image Department. We also work closely with the Theatre & Performance Collections, coordinating our approach to the acquisition of design material, graphics and so on. The post-1900 Period Expertise Group is a useful forum for developing a co-ordinated approach to collecting and for identifying those areas (such as digital art, product design, film) which we aim to represent coherently.

We collect to represent processes and techniques in all media. In terms of subject matter we seek to acquire work which reflects contemporary culture, including material which addresses political, cultural and social issues such as climate change; health; identity. By following the established patterns and purposes in collecting we are better able to collect effectively and systematically and also to co-ordinate our acquisition policy with the other national museums with whom we might otherwise appear to overlap or compete. At the same time we are alert to new areas of art and design practice which may relate only tangentially to existing collection strengths, but are nevertheless pertinent to the V&A's role and remit. We also aim to continue building the collections in ways which reflect the cultural diversity of London and the UK

Collecting priorities are also linked to plans for new permanent galleries (and to the rotation of light-sensitive objects in such galleries) and to major exhibition projects, as well as departmental displays. It is often cheaper and more cost-effective to acquire works for such projects than to borrow. Our current priorities in this area include finding substitutes for British Museum prints currently on loan to the British Galleries and works in all media for major forthcoming exhibitions. Collecting priorities can be summarised in several broad categories, but within each of those categories there are more specific priorities which may be object types, work by individual named artists, or work from particular groups or geographic areas.

#### 4.1.1 Design and the Archive of Art and Design (AAD)

These collections which are jointly managed, comprise some 300 archives and over 80,000 drawings. They aim to represent the design process from conception to consumption and together provide a preeminent point of access to primary source material for the study of design. They include records of individual artists and designers, businesses and institutions involved in the production, marketing, promotion and study of art and design, including order books, correspondence, accounts, diaries, photographs, and promotional material; and European and American drawings for architecture, the applied and industrial arts, product design, fashion, and also sculptors' drawings.

The collection has some international rivals for major historical material, but no national rivals except in terms of architectural drawings, where the holdings complement those of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). Since 2004 the RIBA collection has been housed at the V&A. The RIBA collection is very large (ca. 1,000,000 items) but remains the property of its membership. WID's collection differs from the RIBA in that it includes designs for building by type, as well as by architect. Architects' archives are, where appropriate, directed to the RIBA and fine arts archives to Tate; in other areas the V&A is as anxious to ensure that archives find an appropriate home as to add them to the V&A's collection. Since its foundation the British Museum has occasionally acquired design drawings, but as works of art, rather than as examples of a design process.

The V&A has a remit to lead public perception and understanding of 'design' as a category and as a process, and this must be reflected in our collecting policy. In the field of design drawings we continue to collect contemporary examples in those areas in which we already have strong holdings and which relate directly to the other V&A collections – furniture, textiles, ceramics, and metalwork. Areas of design activity which fall outside these traditional categories are now being targeted: product design, fashion design and illustration, garden design, designs relating to shops and shopping, and graphic design (complementing existing strengths in the print collections).

Though much of the design material we collect relates to the domestic milieu, we also aim to collect designs for public projects, such as monuments and sculpture. Wherever possible we aim to acquire the complete 'job bag' (everything from first concept to specification). We are aware

of the importance of CAD in the design industry and we are investigating how best to collect or represent this process. 3D models are collected where they play a significant part in demonstrating or elucidating the design process. We continue to collect contemporary architects' drawings with a focus on global architecture. The RIBA collects the work of British architects only. A further distinction is that the V&A collects designs that represent the art of architecture, whereas the RIBA collects material that represents the processes of architecture.

We do not proactively acquire design for film, which is the province primarily of the British Film Institute. However, where a designer's career includes film among other design disciplines, or where specific works clearly relate to existing strands of V&A collecting and offer new perspectives on other design disciplines such as architecture, interiors, furniture, graphics and fashion, design for film may be considered suitable for the V&A's collection.

Priorities for the AAD are dictated by two factors, the first being a moral obligation to accept accruals to our existing archival collections to prevent archives being dispersed unnecessarily, and the second being storage space. The implication of the latter is that, realistically, we do not accept or seek to acquire any large archives, but otherwise we remain interested in high-quality material (i.e. from a significant name; material that documents a career or business concisely; material which represents the design process clearly; or where there will be predictable research interest). Our other priorities are archives which fill a gap (such as ceramics design, or male fashion), or which supplement our strongest existing holdings (e.g. stained glass, silver). Archives with strong links to a particular locality would be directed where possible to a local authority repository, and it is our practice to consider whether there might be a suitable alternative home for an archive before we decide to acquire it for the V&A.

#### 4.1.2 Paintings

The collection contains over 2000 oil paintings, of which around a third are Continental and two thirds are British; over 2000 portrait miniatures; 6800 watercolours; over 10,000 British drawings, illustrations and sketchbooks; and 2000 Old Master drawings.

The collection began in 1857 with John Sheepshanks' gift of 233 oil paintings and 289 watercolours, drawings (and etchings) by mainly contemporary British artists, and was known for 50 years as the National Gallery of British Art. Since the foundation of Tate, the collecting of oils has been largely restricted to decorative paintings, works related to decorative schemes, representations of the decorative arts, and portraits of practitioners of art and design. The collection of 19<sup>th</sup>-century British oil paintings, which includes the principal collection of John Constable, is, nonetheless, second only to that of Tate. The foreign oil paintings are also of national significance.

We continue to have national responsibility for collecting watercolours and also English portrait miniatures, the collection of which is unrivalled, with foreign examples acquired to provide a wider context. In addition it was recently agreed with the British Museum, the National Gallery,



the National Portrait Gallery and Tate that we should take on national responsibility for pastels. We also collect drawings and have strength in Italian, Netherlandish and French as well as British examples, and such amateur media as silhouettes and cut-paper work. The collection is outstanding for the range of painting media represented, from late antiquity to the present.

In collecting unique works on paper, we continue the established pattern of acquisition, concentrating on the work of British artists, and artists working in Britain, including recent immigrants and artists from the African and Asian diasporas. We continue to focus on the innovative use of traditional media, and on the processes and techniques of artistic production. Drawings by sculptors and installation artists are particularly desirable. With three recognised 'National' collections (portrait miniatures; British watercolours; pastels) we continue to give priority to significant acquisitions in these areas, as opportunities and resources allow.

#### 4.1.3. Photographs

The collection consists of ca. 300,000 prints. The V&A was the first museum in the world to collect the art of photography. This began in 1856 with the purchase by Sir Henry Cole of ca. 30 exhibits – representing architecture, landscape, figure studies, still life and the nude – from the annual exhibition of the Photographic Society of London. As well as building an extensive 'virtual museum' of reproductive photographs illustrative of art, architecture and design, acquisitions were also made direct from major creative photographers. The collection is international and spans the whole history of the subject from 1839 to the present. After its 1977 transfer from the NAL to the re-named Prints, Drawings & Photographs and Paintings Department, holdings of 19<sup>th</sup> - and more especially 20<sup>th</sup> -century classic photography expanded rapidly and the collection of contemporary photography became a priority.

The Photographs collection overlaps and complements many other collections nationally and internationally. It has national responsibility for collections of the art of photography and is among the most important collections of its kind in the world. It does not include photographic hardware, which is the responsibility of the National Media Museum, Bradford, a branch of the Science Museum (NMSI), London.

The V&A's collection (which is the National Collection of the Art of Photography) is unique in covering the history of photography as a fine and applied art medium. The history of photography is traditionally centred on Western Europe and the United States, and although we will always seek to improve our holdings of such classic photographs, our priority now is to collect work from the Middle East and Africa, Eastern Europe and Asia. We continue to focus on work by emerging British photographers, with Black British photography a particular priority at present (with funds from the HLF Collecting Cultures grant for 'Staying Power: the story of Black British Identity 1950s-1990s' to support acquisitions in this field). We also wish to expand our holdings of material relating to the presentation of photographs, such as early framed exhibition prints, and daguerreotypes.

Other priorities include contemporary fashion photography, and photojournalism. We also hope to add to our holdings of camera-less photography. Photo books continue to be an area of interest, but these are collected by the National Art Library with guidance from Photographs curators. We are also concerned to establish a national collecting framework for photographers' archives and to establish what should be the role, if any, of the V&A.

#### 4.1.4 Prints

This section is responsible for collecting printed images created as works of art and to fulfill a practical purpose. The Print collection had its origins in the NAL, and from 1909 prints were part of the Prints, Drawings and Paintings Department in its various guises.

The Prints collection comprises ca. 500,000 items, including fine art prints from the Renaissance to the present; reproductive prints; printed designs for the decorative arts; portraits; topography; social history subjects, religious and pagan symbolism; costume and fashion plates; fan leaves; caricatures; playing cards, packaging, stationery, posters and other commercial graphics, and wallpapers.

Uniquely in Britain, the Prints collection embraces 'fine' prints and commercial production. It also houses the most comprehensive collection of printed designs for the decorative arts in the UK, one of the world's foremost collections, and is the only Museum collection that aims to represent modes in presenting prints. It does not seek to rival the British Museum's collection of Old Master prints, although acquisitions in this field are made to improve representation of printmaking techniques, where the Museum aims to be comprehensive. The V&A is the only national institution to have consistently collected prints by living artists since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

The V&A is the only national museum to collect across the whole spectrum of 'print' from ephemera to fine art. Many of our priority areas for collecting extend or build on established strengths (wallpapers, greetings cards, fine art prints) but focus on manifestations which employ new media or have new applications. For example, it is a continuing priority to acquire wallpapers designed by artists and made specifically for installations and exhibitions; our greetings card acquisitions now include greetings for religious occasions other than Christian, and corporate greetings. In the field of fine-art prints, we are especially interested in examples which employ digital or other new or unconventional media, and the application of print to 3D formats, including unique works as well as multiples. Within fine art printmaking, another of our key priorities is work by artists from Africa and the African diaspora.

Of our traditional collecting strengths, posters (commercial and political) remain a high priority, not least with the aim of targeting specific material for the planned Gallery of Graphic Design and Communication, and to cover significant gaps in our holdings overall. These include work from the Polish Poster School (1950s – 1980s) as our current holdings are not representative of this important area; International Typographic School (largely Swiss in origin); 'new wave'

graphic design of the 1980s; Chicano posters, which are missing from our otherwise good holdings of 1960s and 70s agit-prop posters. We also wish to acquire more material relating to the design process for posters, since our current holdings are unrepresentative (most of the original poster artwork in the collection is for pre-war London Transport posters). As with the other Sections (Designs, Computer Art) we also want to find ways to 'collect' or archive posters and other graphics which exist only in a digital form. Strategies for collecting contemporary material include visiting international poster biennales, and working with the Design and Art Direction awards to get copies of the best of the nominated posters. We are alert to current events which generate posters, such as the Olympic Games, the World Cup, and UK and US elections.

In keeping with the Museum's founding emphasis on design and making, we are keen to acquire material relating to the processes of printmaking, such as blocks, plates and proofs (with published impressions, if we do not already hold them), subject to the usual criteria with regard to the quality of the work. We also continue to collect printed designs for the decorative arts; likewise, trade cards relating to products in the V&A collections – particularly textiles and dress, furniture and interiors, metalwork, jewellery, ceramics and glass, as well as the printing trade.

#### 4.1.5 The Book

The National Art Library holds incomparable collections representing every aspect of the art, craft and design of the book from illuminated manuscripts to paperbacks. Many aspects of the collection are of national significance, including illuminated manuscripts, calligraphy, comics and graphic novels, illustrated books, fine printing, typography and book bindings. In all areas activity is co-ordinated with that of other major national collections such as the British Library, Tate Archive and smaller specialist organizations.

Medieval and post-medieval illuminated manuscripts were acquired from the 1850s, in the form of volumes but also cuttings and leaves from complete manuscripts (there are almost 3,000 such fragments). All were intended as a design source for educational purposes, but the collection includes notable examples of miniature painting by celebrated illuminators. Examples of early printing were also collected in this way, both in the form of complete works and single pages or even initials, to provide an encyclopedic account of book design and ornament. The collection of fine bindings similarly aims to provide an overview from the medieval to the present, including numerous European examples, of which the armorial book-bindings are the best in the country. Holdings of illustrated books in trade and deluxe bindings are also extensive. The collection is strong in private press books, writing and lettering books, fine typography, and *livres d'artistes*. The 20<sup>th</sup>-century book art collection is unrivalled in Britain. Digital book production and design is also being documented as a 21<sup>st</sup> – century art form.

The Book Section was established to support the National Art Library which has responsibility for the history of the art and design of the book. The Library co-ordinates its curatorial and documentary collecting policies balancing national obligations to both the documentary collection for readers, and *livres d'artistes*, book art, and the arts of the book. We remain committed to the latter areas; through the exhibition *Blood on Paper* (2008) the V&A raised its profile and asserted its commitment to contemporary book art.

Other categories in which we continue to build the collection are illustrated books (the V&A Illustration Awards acts as a driver for collecting in this field, and a means of identifying contemporary acquisitions); photo books (see under Photographs above); comics; typography; book design, all aspects of book production, book packaging and presentation (from traditional private presses to trade series and bookjackets). Our other noteworthy collections of book arts are fine bindings, illumination and calligraphy, and these are also augmented where feasible. In addition we conduct twice-yearly trawls of ephemera, magazines and mass market books, a long-term strategy to document changes in print-based design 'on the high street'.

#### 4.1.6 Computer Art

Until recently, the Museum held relatively few works that illustrate the early years of computer-generated art and design. However, the Department now holds one of the world's largest collections of computer art, created from the 1950s to the present day. Computer-generated prints began to enter the Department's collection in the late 1960s, at around the time of the ground-breaking *Cybernetic Serendipity* exhibition held at the Institute of Contemporary Arts. Other works were acquired from time to time, but the strength of the Department's collection today is the result of two major acquisitions in recent years. Following the acquisition of the Patric Prince Collection and the archives of the Computer Arts Society, the V&A now holds an internationally significant collection of computer-generated art from the 1960s to the 1990s and beyond. Together, these major acquisitions form the basis for the V&A's emerging national collection of computer-generated art.

The bulk of the artworks consist of plotter drawings, screen prints, inkjet prints, posters and photographs, but there are also examples in other media, including 3D images and computer files. The founding-stone of the V&A's expanding collection is the material assembled by Patric Prince, an art historian and archivist of computer art. Based in California, Prince actively collected computer-assisted art works for many years. In addition to some 200 individual artworks, the Patric Prince collection also contains a huge quantity of books, archival material and ephemera, including monographs, manuals, exhibition catalogues, slides, off-prints and interviews with practising artists. Because the early history of digital culture is still under-documented, the material she accumulated is now of great significance to researchers.

The Museum also holds the archives of the Computer Arts Society (CAS), which amounts to another 200 artworks. As computer artists passed through London, they often gave the Society examples of their work. These were stored until the V&A acquired the collection in 2007, along

with the Society's working records of its own activities. The CAS material complements the Patric Prince collection perfectly. So-called "Algorithmic" works are particularly well represented and the Department already holds significant pieces by major figures such as Harold Cohen, Paul Brown, Roman Verostko, Jean-Pierre Hebert and Mark Wilson.

We plan to build on these core collections, although the logistical problems of preservation and display are yet to be resolved. Priority will be given to digital works, or applications of digital technology, which relate to or extend our holdings in other media (e.g. the book, wallpaper, digital greetings, etc). Areas of practice we wish to research further, and may in future decide to collect, include digital animation, computer games, and the work of artists exploiting gaming technology.

## 4.2 Further Reading

### DESIGN PROCESS

#### Introductions

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Darby, Michael. *John Pollard Seddon* (London, 1983).

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Wedgwood, Alexandra. *A.W.N. Pugin and the Pugin family* (London, 1985).

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Mark Evans, *The Painted World: from Illumination to abstraction*, (Victoria & Albert Museum, London 2005)

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- Haworth-Booth, Mark, ed. *Personal Choice: A Celebration of 20th century photographs* (London, 1983).
- Haworth-Booth, Mark, ed. *The Golden Age of British Photography 1839-1900* (Millerton, 1984).
- Haworth-Booth, Mark and McCauley, Anne. *The Museum & the Photograph: Collecting photography at the Victoria and Albert Museum, 1853-1900* (Williamstown, Mass., 1998).
- Haworth-Booth, Mark. *Photography: An independent art, photographs from the Victoria and Albert Museum 1839-1996* (London, 1997).
- Haworth-Booth, *Things: A Spectrum of Photography 1850-2001*, (Jonathan Cape Publishers , 2004

## PRINTS

### Introductions

- Lambert, Susan. *Image multiplied: Five centuries of printed reproductions of paintings and drawings* (London, 1987).
- Timmers, Margaret, ed. *The Power of the Poster* (London, 1998).
- Timmers, Margaret, ed. *Impressions of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: Fine art prints from the V&A collection* (London, 2001).
- Saunders, Gill. *Wallpaper in Interior Decoration* (London, 2002).

### Catalogues

- Hamilton, Jean. *Wallpapers: A history and illustrated catalogue of the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London, 1982).
- Hamilton, Jean. *Playing cards in the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London, HMSO, 1988).
- Miller, Elizabeth. *Sixteenth-century Italian ornament prints: The Lafrery volume* (London, 1998).
- Lambert, Susan. *Prints Art and Techniques* (London, 2001)
- Saunders, Gill and Miles, Rosie. *Prints Now: Directions and Definitions* (London, 2006)
- Saunders, Gill. *Picturing Plants: an analytical history of botanical illustration* (1995; revised ed., London and Chicago, 2009)

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Hogben, Carol, and Rowan Watson, eds. *From Manet to Hockney: modern artists' illustrated books* (London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 1985).

Hobbs, Anne Stevenson, ed. *Fables* (London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 1986)

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MacRobert, T. M. *Printed books: a short introduction to fine typography* (London: HMSO, 1971). 2nd imp.

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Whalley, Joyce Irene, and Tessa Chester. *A history of children's book illustration* (London: John Murray with the Victoria and Albert Museum, 1988)

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## 5. MUSEUM OF CHILDHOOD, BETHNAL GREEN

### 5.1. Scope, history , standing and collecting

In 1922 Arthur Sabin was appointed Curator of the Bethnal Green Museum with the remit to reorganise the museum. At the time, the Museum's collections included a mixture of European Fine Art and Furniture, some Eastern works of art, a range of animal and food products from the 1851 exhibition and examples of trades local to the East End.

His main vision, however, was to develop collections and displays relating to childhood and to attempt to make these accessible for children. Sabin envisaged displays that would consist of toys that East Enders may never have seen, let alone owned. In the early years of the collection major donors included Mrs Greg and Queen Mary, both avid collectors of toys and miniatures. These donors and Sabin's own interests resulted in acquisitions being primarily toys and dolls houses.

In 1974 under the Directorship of Sir Roy Strong, the Bethnal Green Museum was officially launched as a museum of childhood - this marked its advancement from predominantly being a collection of toys to presenting a representation of the history and culture of childhood broader than that of any comparable institution in the world.

The existing childhood collections at Bethnal Green were supplemented with childhood material transferred across from the V&A South Kensington's Collections Departments. Since 1974 the Museum has had its own collecting policy and priorities which lie within the broad aims of the V&A as a whole.

The Collections have been re-categorised into seven sections: archive; children's clothing; dolls houses and miniatures; ephemera; home and childcare (early years and furniture collections); play & learning (dolls, games and puzzles, puppets and toy theatres, soft toys and toys) and representations of childhood.

The MoC's collecting priorities will be focused on social history, visual arts, material relating to older children, early years, contemporary objects and collecting for specific temporary exhibitions.

#### 5.1.1 Archive

The Museum holds the archives of four major British toy manufacturers, Lines Bros. Ltd., Paul and Marjorie Abbatt, Mettoy and Palitoy. These contain a wide range of original material, including photographic material, trade catalogues, advertisements and promotional material, press cuttings, financial records, company and personal correspondence and designs. The



archives as a whole relate to varied areas of interest including industrial history, with particular reference to British toy manufacturing, the social history of education and child development, theories of play and toy design. The majority of the material is from the 20th century.

In addition the archive contains the Celia Haddon collection relating to education; the Faith Eaton archive relating to the history of dolls and dolls' houses and the Anthony H Lebus archive of personal childhood correspondence dates from the 1920's to the 1940's. The Bob Dixon archive of ephemera and research notes for his book 'Playing Them False' contains material from the late 20th Century. There is also an oral history archive which records experiences of childhood and growing up as experienced by a culturally diverse group of people now living in the East End of London.

The archive contains original historical records of the Museum of Childhood, including catalogues and other registers, photographic material, records of past exhibitions and displays and material relating to the history of the building.

We will acquire material relating to and documenting the history of the British toy-making industry, from the 19th century to present. This includes archives of British toy manufacturers and makers, and the collection of oral histories and reminiscences of individuals involved in the industry, including material associated with and illustrating these stories. In particular, records with the same provenance as existing collections of Lines Bros. Ltd., Paul and Marjorie Abbatt, Palitoy and Mettoy material, and which add to the currently incomplete archives of these manufacturers will be actively sought. The Museum will also consider acquiring archive material relating to and further documenting objects within its collection, as well as that which supports its broader collecting themes, including the social history of childhood. All formats will be considered, although issues of long-term preservation and access will be taken into account in particular for machine-readable and film formats. The Museum will continue to add to its reference files.

### 5.1.2 Children's Clothing

The V&A MoC holds the premier public collection of children's clothing in the UK, with multiple examples of many types and dates of garment. It is also the most diverse, containing mourning wear, work clothing, uniforms, fancy dress, swimwear, and many of the 20 century's innovations as well as main garments, accessories and underwear, mainly from the 18th century to the present day. The age range which the costume collection covers is from birth to eighteen years.

The collection is lacking some important specific garments, e g a Norfolk jacket, a girl's short crinoline and a bustle frame or pad. Further examples of boy's clothes, teenagers' garments, character merchandising, mourning garments, hats and work clothes are also highly desirable. We will if possible, add copies of the main trade publication of the 1930s-70s (The Children's Outfitter, later known as Junior Age) to the collection.

### 5.1.3 Dolls' houses and miniatures

The Museum has a collection of around 80 dolls' houses originating mostly from Britain and Europe. It is one of the largest and best public collections in the world. The houses range in date from the 17th- to the early 21st-century. Many different styles are represented from the traditional Nuremberg House of 1673, through the 18th-century Tate Baby House and 19th-century Killer Cabinet rooms to the 20th-century commercially produced examples from companies such as Tri-ang.

The collection of model shops and kitchens are all European in origin. These include a late 17<sup>th</sup>-century Dutch cabinet kitchen, a Nuremberg kitchen from around 1800, several 19th-century butcher's shops as well as modern examples from Bodo Hennig and the Sylvanian Family ranges.

The Museum has a large collection of miniature china, both doll and dolls' house size, dating from the early 19th century. This mostly comprises tea and dinner sets from Britain, Germany, France, and Japan. The bulk of the collection is English with sets by Minton, Spode and Royal Doulton among others. In addition to the predominantly porcelain examples there are others made from glass, wood, plastic and enameled metal.

Although the doll's house collection is strong there are some significant gaps where examples by particular makers such as Bliss and Gottschalk should be sought.

### 5.1.4 Ephemera Collections

This collection includes: greetings cards, official documents, letters and diaries – there is some overlap with the archive and the collecting plan seeks to clearly differentiate between the two collections to avoid duplication. The 500 or so greetings cards form by far the largest group of items in this collection: most are for birthdays and Christmas. They range from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to post World War Two. There are also calendars, stickers and party stationery, and a small group of greetings cards made by children. Official documents include groups of items associated with youth movements, religion, education and the two World Wars. Ephemera also includes a Mother's Day medallion from the USA and a group of children's teeth, which were saved for the visit of the tooth fairy.

Diaries letters and official documents are the two areas which most need to be expanded. Other areas, notably the greetings cards, should be collected selectively: recent and contemporary material is sought, particularly to demonstrate the use of retro themes, new materials, multicultural material and the growing number of licensed characters.

### 5.1.5 Home and Childcare

This collection comprises the Early Years and Furniture sections. It includes feeding equipment, teething, hygiene, mobility and ritual. It ranges in date from the 1730s to the present day. The children's furniture is one of the best in the UK. It contains several hundred pieces, ranging from a traditional English oak cradle dated 1641 to 'Play +' plastic foam shapes from Italy that were launched in 2005. The highlights include a child's house-shaped wardrobe of 1712, an ormolu-decorated 'bateau' cradle of 1810 and a number of artist-linked pieces – a 'cat' chair made by Gerard Rigot; a high chair designed by Gerrit Rietveld; two of William Morris's Sussex chairs; iconic designs such as the Charles & Ray Eames 'elephant' seat originally designed in the 1940s; Peter Opsvik's 1972 Tripp Trapp chair which can be adjusted to fit anyone from toddlers to adults and the moon-shaped plastic foam rocking chair made by Ikea in 2001.

We will expand this fairly recent early years collection, although the number of prams has to be limited for reasons of space and maintenance. We will select items relating to mobility and walking, as they seem under-represented in many museum collections. As this is an area of very rapid change in our own time, we also need to continue to keep up with the latest product developments. Extending the archival material around the subject area would be advantageous.

Three particularly significant objects which the museum does not have:

a Stokke 'Explory' pram

a 1920s deep-bodied pram

a 'bubby' pot

The home and childcare furniture collection is very good, but still needs to expand selectively to maintain its quality. It has few 18th century pieces, and no examples of decoratively painted children's furniture. Having recently added to our 20th- and 21st-century holdings, we need to continue to add contemporary examples.

### 5.1.6 Play and Learning

The Play and Learning Collections comprise: Dolls, Games & Puzzles, Learning & Development, Puppets & Toy Theatres, Soft Toys and Toys.

Dolls number over 8000 items, the MoC has one of the most significant and largest collections of dolls in the world and is split into material categories: Ceramics, Cloth, Composition, Plastic, Wax and Wooden. It is international in its scope and breadth.

Highlights include: fine examples of ceramic and bisque dolls by makers such as Steiner Jumeau, Bru, Armand Marseille and Kammer & Reinhard; cloth dolls by known makers such as Lenci (Italian) Käthe Kruse, Steiff (German) as well as British firms such as Dean's, Norah Wellings and Chad Valley; good examples of plastic dolls include: Rheinische Gummi- und Celluloid-Fabrik (1873-1930), a boxed Barbie 1961 made by Mattel Inc (1945 to present) and a

collection of Sasha dolls made by Trendon toys. An early notable example of a wax doll is a 17<sup>th</sup>- or 18<sup>th</sup>-century effigy of the infant Don Santiago de la Haza y Laguno. The other highlights of the museum's wax doll collection are mainly Victorian and Edwardian. The highlight of the museum's collection of wooden dolls is a group of about a dozen English pre-1800 examples, notably 'The Old Pretender' doll of about 1680 and Mrs Leahy's doll of 1700-20.

The Museum should seek to acquire some pre-20th-century examples, particularly US examples of rag dolls from 1850-1920, and a Kamkins cloth doll. Examples of early composition would still be sought, such as a Greiner (USA) from the 1840s-1900s, or a Schillings doll from late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. An original 1959 Barbie by Mattel and 1963 Sindy by Pedigree in the weekender outfit are desirable acquisitions, as are pre-war plastic dolls and black and Asian dolls. Examples of finely dressed Montanari are sought. Any securely attributed wax dolls should be considered. An identified doll by John Edwards would be highly desirable. An example by an earlier US firm such as the Jointed Doll Company of Vermont is sought. The Museum has only one Japanese kokeshi (pillar) doll and might acquire further examples.

#### Games and puzzles

The Museum's games and puzzle collection of ca. 3,000 items is one of the finest in the world. There are five main categories in this section – board games, card games, indoor games, outdoor games and puzzles. The board games include important early examples, mostly published in England; children's favourites; classics of the 20<sup>th</sup> century such as Monopoly and Scrabble and the more recent examples such as Trivial Pursuit and Cranium. One of the Museum's oldest objects is a board game from Germany dated 1535. The outdoor games and toys collection is relatively small but covers the basics from battledore and shuttlecock to jacks and marbles as well as roller skates and spacehoppers. The museum holds a good selection of 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>- century dissected puzzles and a good range of 20<sup>th</sup>- century jigsaws covering most of the major manufacturers. The collection includes an example of one of the first dissected puzzles by John Spilsbury and has been enhanced by the acquisition (jointly with Historic Royal Palaces) of Lady Charlotte Finch's puzzle cabinet, containing the examples used to teach the children of King George III.

The addition of some American and European games is desirable.

#### Learning and development toys

The learning toys collection is unique and encompasses the history of educational movements and related toys. The museums hold material relating to Paul & Majorie Abbatt, Friedrich Frobel and Maria Montessori. The collection includes an array of toys that help children to learn educational basics and teaches hand eye co-ordination, such as ABC blocks, shapes and sorters, as well as contemporary items by companies such as Vtech.

The developmental toys include typewriters, sewing machines and other domestic appliances made as toy versions, such as mangles, vacuum cleaners and tools. This also includes push and pull along toys which encourage young children to balance and walk.

### Puppets and Toy theatres

The museum has a good selection of puppets (ca. 600) representing many cultures from around the world such as Japan, India, China, Java, (former) Burma, Sicily, Italy and the UK. Many examples are toy or souvenir editions from the 19th and 20th centuries, reproduced from traditional stories and shows, many of which were not originally meant directly for children.

20th-century puppetry in the UK is well represented with examples by famous makers such as Christine Glanville (who worked with Gerry Anderson on Thunderbirds) and Mary Bligh Bond, Winifred Gill and Lotte Reiniger, a growing collection of Pelham puppets as well as puppets relating to popular TV shows.

The museum has a small collection of toy theatres and sets ranging from the early 19th century to the 1960s.

### Soft Toys

The museum has over 150 teddy bears, ranging in date from the early 20th to the early 21st centuries. The collection contains examples from most of the major teddy bear manufacturers worldwide. There are ca. 25 pre-1920 bears most of which are German, including half a dozen Steiffs. There are also early examples of British and American bears. The 1920s and 1930s bears are German and English and include such leading names as Schuco, Merrythought and Chad Valley.

As well as a selection of pandas and koalas, the Museum has several character bears including Paddington, Rupert, Superted, Winnie-the-Pooh and Care Bears. There is a collection of early bears who were dressed by their owners, the Cattley children.

The Museum's collection of soft toys includes cats, dogs, lambs, rabbits, foxes, lions and monkeys. As with bears, the best known manufacturers are well represented and include Steiff, Schuco, Chad Valley, Merrythought and Deans. There are several character toys in this collection, older favourites such as Mickey Mouse and the Wombles as well as newer ones such as the Teletubbies.

The Museum seeks to acquire Steiff examples from the latter half of the 20th century, and animals in general from the same period.

### Toys

The Museum's toy collection is extensive and includes a huge range of material, dating mainly from the 18th century to the present. It includes optical toys, mechanical toys, constructional toys, vehicles and play figures.

The optical toys collection includes most of the well known standard nineteenth century examples used for both educational and recreational purposes. The Museum is particularly rich in lantern slides, with examples ranging from early 19th century panoramic and movable slides to early 20th-century sets, based on stories, geographical locations and occupations. There is a large range of peepshows, including two 18th-century Engelbrecht theatres and the classic views of the Great Exhibition and the Thames Tunnel. There are examples of early handheld devices including a Game Boy and Game Gear. Most of the major consoles feature, by Sega,

Nintendo and Sony, and the early television linked classics are represented by a Phillips Binatone and an Amstrad CPC 464. We will fill gaps in the collection of optical toys and strengthen the collection of computer and related games.

The mechanical toys include a small group of 19th-century automata. Clockwork toys are well represented from the late 19th century to the 1970s and feature well known makers, such as Bing and Lehman as well as later examples produced in Japan and China. There are battery operated toys mostly from the 1950s to 1970s, including some good examples of space toys and robots.

The constructional toys collection is a large one with representative examples from many of the leading makers. Sets include Richter Ankerblocks, Meccano, Lotts, Minibrix, Bayko, Kiddicraft, K'nex and Lego. In acquiring constructional toys, we will focus on early and contemporary examples.

The vehicle collection comprises cars, trains, boats and planes and includes typical examples from the companies Hornby, Airfix, Marklin, Bing, Lesney (Matchbox) and Mettoy (Corgi). The collection in the main is British and German but also includes some recycled toys from Africa. This area of the collection needs comprehensive strengthening.

The toy figure collection comprises ca. 1,000 objects and includes soldiers and civilian model figures. The group of soldiers is small but includes a wide range of different types (flats, solids, hollow cast, die cast and moulded) and materials (paper, card, wood, metal and plastic). The civilian group includes farm sets, animals and railway and everyday scenes. There are also collections of character toys and figures from films and television. Following the withdrawal of the Britains Loan, we will aim to fill the gap in our collection of toy figures.

Other toys in the collection include rocking horses, Noah's Arks, crib/crèche scenes and figures from around the world, paper toys, a collection of artist made toys and toys made by children. We shall fill gaps in the rocking horse collection, and consider collecting other types of rocking animals.

### 5.1.7 Representations of Childhood

#### Painting

The paintings collection (ca. 40 items) consists of items mainly from the Dixon Bequest left to the Museum over 100 years ago.

#### Photography

The photographic collection comprises ca. 800 photographs dating from 1860s onwards, documenting children's lives. The collection contains a small selection of family photograph albums allowing the placement of the child within the family group as well as a good selection of posed studio portraits of children.

Particularly significant objects include a photograph album of one child's life (Justinian Laczko) from birth in 1874 to his death in 1884, aged 10. Another album by Bassano Studio has photographs of all the children who attended the 1936 Lord Mayor's Fancy Dress Ball.

Other material includes posed and un-posed images of children undertaking various activities. More recent material includes images by Alec Brooking who, as a head teacher in the 1970s and 1980s, took a body of work based on his pupils, and photographer John Heywood, whose images document children of the 1980s.

The MoC Collections are not rich in fine examples of the visual arts. We seek to acquire works relating to 'aspects' and representations of childhood rather than straight portraiture. It is important that we aim to collect both historical and contemporary work and across all media.

## 5.2. Further Reading

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## 6. THEATRE & PERFORMANCE DEPARTMENT

### 6.1. Scope, history, standing and collecting

The Theatre & Performance collections represent the National collection for the Performing Arts. Dedicated to the history, craft and practice of the live performing arts in the UK, its primary emphasis is on drama, dance, opera and musical theatre. In providing the national record of performance, it combines the functions of museum, archive, library and educational resource. Between 1974 and 2007 the department was referred to as the Theatre Museum, and this terminology is used where appropriate in the following text.

Since live performance is ephemeral, the department documents its production and reception by gathering a variety of evidence in different media. Objects are collected for their significance in the history and development of performance, which may or may not include an aesthetic judgement.

The bulk of the collections falls into two main groups: Core collections comprising the most popular and heavily used material, organised into large series according to format / material type (photographs, designs, prints, etc), and Special Collections which are mainly archival and kept distinct. (See Appendix 5.6). Acquisitions are made through:

- a) pro-active gathering of documentation on a systematic, daily basis, the pursuit of target collections and items, and the creation of its own record of contemporary performance through video and photography; and
- b) re-active consideration of material offered as a gift, purchase or bequest.

The Museum is widely regarded as leader of the many performing arts collections in the UK. It takes a central role in SIBMAS (the International Association of Performing Arts Museums and Libraries), the UK's subject specialist network for the subject of performance - the Theatre Information Group and in The Society for Theatre Research (STR). Its co-publication with the STR of the *Directory of Performing Arts Resources* in 1998 led to the then Theatre Museum being a leading partner in the *Backstage* project which created an electronic portal for UK performing arts material. It has engaged in several large-scale partnership projects with, and funded by, the HE sector, focussing on research, digitisation and resource discovery.

The Theatre Museum was founded as a distinct department of the V&A in 1974 when two great V&A collections – Gabrielle Enthoven's London playbills and programmes, and Harry Beard's prints, libretti, etc. –were merged with the holdings of two external organisations. They were the British Theatre Museum Association and Richard Buckle's 'Friends of the Museum of Performing Arts' which added costumes and scenic cloths to the V&A's paper-based collections. The Theatre Museum's role as the central performing arts holding was rapidly affirmed by the acquisition of the Antony Hippisley Coxe Circus Collection, and the British Puppet Guild

Collection. The opportunity was also taken to widen its brief to include rock 'n' pop, in response to gifts from Pink Floyd, The Who, Elton John, etc., and the booming interest in popular music. The department is the deposit library on a *de facto* basis for professional performance in the UK and its collection of programmes is the most comprehensive in the world. No other institution documents UK performing arts from day to day or offers such depth of related material.

In 1987 the Theatre Museum moved from South Kensington to its own premises in Covent Garden. As the UK's leading performing arts library and repository, it was the natural home for over 60,000 volumes on the closure of the British Theatre Association – formerly the largest play library in the country – and major archives including the Arts Council of Great Britain's. Since 1992 the department has made archival recordings of current stage productions for its National Video Archive of Performance (NVAP) under a unique agreement with the Federation of Entertainment Unions. Video has added a vital dimension to conventional collections by capturing performance in real time, and is much in demand for study, display and education. It has strengthened contemporary collecting with the support of a video producer and a contemporary performance curator, who has also improved coverage of Black and Asian companies and alternative theatre. In 2007, the Theatre Museum premises in Covent Garden closed, and the department was subsequently renamed V&A Department of Theatre & Performance. In 2009 new Theatre & Performance galleries were opened at the V&A, replacing the displays formerly housed at the Theatre Museum.

As the National collection for the Performing Arts, the department has a wide collecting remit. However, given that staff and financial resources are finite, clear guidelines for collecting are necessary. Despite the fact that the performing arts are global, collecting focuses on performance in the UK. It is also prioritised by subject area, strength of coverage and public demand (see Appendix 5.6.). Where coverage is modest, a conscious decision is made either to improve the holdings, or not to collect and refer researchers instead to holdings elsewhere. As with any collecting policy, there are minor exceptions which prove the rule. In the Theatre & Performance department's this largely stems from the globalisation of the performing arts. Non-UK material may occasionally be collected where it is vital for a fuller understanding of the arts in this country.

Strategic acquisition of material of national importance is difficult to achieve with limited resources. Nevertheless, the aim is to maintain a list of collections to be pursued which will assist the evaluation of offers of other material that the department may consider acquiring reactively. The following are particular priority areas of the collection which the department aims to develop.

Although the department will continue to acquire important historical material that completes or complements its holdings, it will seek to make contemporary and 20<sup>th</sup>-century collecting a priority by:

- updating the national record of performing arts across the UK with programmes, posters, press cuttings, playtexts, library materials including commercial and archival videos/DVDs etc.
- recording more productions and interviews with key practitioners for the National Video Archive of Performance, where possible extending coverage beyond London to include dance and other forms, especially popular entertainment.
- continuing pro-active photography by using the department's photographer to record current productions and by acquiring the work of outside photographers.
- expanding oral history recordings.
- selectively building holdings of modern and contemporary designs, models, costumes, prompt-books and archives.
- developing holdings on experimental theatre in the post-1968 era, and hard-to-document areas such as physical theatre, mime, visual, site-specific, environmental, processional, carnival, Black, Asian and other ethnic minority performance.
- improving coverage of areas such as dance in musicals/theatre shows, and especially new dance in Britain, through strategic acquisitions of comparable importance to the department's Anthony Crickmay and Chris Ha photographic collections.
- building its holdings of costumes, scores, recordings and photographs for opera and musical theatre around the Bunnett-Muir bequest of musicals tapes, records, CDs, posters, music sheets and books.
- continuing to document rock 'n' pop and its theatricality by collecting key examples of design and technology as well as press cuttings, photographs etc.
- documenting theatre architecture, stage technology through trade literature, photographs. Files of press cuttings, plans, etc., to be regularly updated and relevant materials acquired such as the Save London Theatres Campaign Archive, and close liaison maintained with the Association of British Theatre Technicians, the Theatres Trust, English Heritage, etc.
- acquiring library materials- new play texts and libretti professionally performed in the UK and key secondary materials including books, pamphlets, periodicals, trade catalogues, CD ROMs, commercial and archival videos, DVDs and other multimedia materials as appropriate.

### 6.1.1 Drama/theatre

This area is the best represented of the performing arts in the collections. Coverage grows significantly from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards via playbills, programmes, posters, texts, reviews, files on practitioners, companies and theatres, books, letters, legal documents, prompt-books (e.g. for *Look Back in Anger* and *The Mousetrap*), photographic collections (e.g. Guy Little, Houston Rogers Douglas Jeffrey), prints, drawings, ceramics and paintings), prints, drawings, ceramics (e.g. Robert Eddison's), paintings.

Costumes and accessories include examples worn by Olivier (e.g. as Richard III and Othello), Gielgud and Edith Evans, from Peter Brook's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and Inca masks from *The Royal Hunt of the Sun*. The design holding, rivalled only by the Robert Tobin Collection (USA), include major work by de Louthembourg, the Grieve family, Wilhelm, Gordon Craig, Ernst Stern, Tanya Moiseiwitsch, Leslie Hurry, Anthony Holland, Ralph Koltai, Sean Kenny, Michael Annals, Sally Jacobs, Voytek, Lez Brotherston, Mark Thompson and other leading names. The Museum is well provided with archives from theatres, companies and producers (e.g. H M Tennent, Royal Court, Tricycle, and Cheek by Jowl) but has fewer for great actors and directors although their work is well represented within the company archives and photographic collections. Writers are well represented with the Christopher Fry personal archive covering a large span of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, alongside writers as diverse as Clemence Dane, Alfred Fagon, Tom Taylor and those produced by Paines Plough – a specialist new writing company whose archive is held by the department. Drama has benefited from being a priority for NVAP recording and is another rich resource for documenting the work of leading contemporary actors, directors and designers. Coverage of Black and Asian work now includes NVAP videos of productions (e.g., *East is East*, *Gem of the Ocean*, *Lift Off*, the *Not Black and White* season of Black writing at the Tricycle), interviews with leading practitioners (*Blackgrounds*), archives (Black Mime Theatre, Temba Theatre, Talawa (on long-term loan), biographical files, photographs and other material in the core collections.

### 6.1.2. Dance

Dance coverage is especially strong for ballet. However, there are significant aspects of other forms in the Collections. Materials include rare early prints, Romantic ballet lithographs, paintings, costumes dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards, designs from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards, photographic collections (e.g. Gordon Anthony, J W Debenham, Anthony Crickmay, Chris Ha), the Cyril Beaumont Collection and the archives of Western Ballet Theatre, Akademi (South Asian Dance in Britain) and London Contemporary Dance Theatre. The Museum holds the world's largest collection of Ballets Russes costumes and scenic cloths including that which Picasso designed for *Le Train Bleu*, together with designs by Bakst, Tchelitchev, Gontcharova etc., drawings by Valentine Gross and the Parmenia Ekstrom Collection of Diaghilev business papers.

### 6.1.3. Opera and Musical Theatre

Opera material includes many libretti, programmes and prints of singers and composers, an original 1720 prompt copy for Handel's *Radamisto*, costumes worn by Chaliapin, Tito Gobbi, Boris Kristoff, Joan Sutherland and in English National Opera and Royal Opera House Covent Garden productions, models and cloths by John Piper for Britten premieres, and the archives of Opera Factory, and impresario Sander Gorlinsky.

Musical Theatre highlights include D'Oyly Carte's Gilbert and Sullivan designs, prompt-books and photographs, the *Salad Days* magic piano, Julie Andrews's *My Fair Lady* ball gown, original conductor's score for *Jesus Christ Superstar* and John Napier's model for the 1996 Lyceum revival, and Maria Bjornson designs for *The Phantom of the Opera*.

Much documentation on musical theatre and opera is embedded in the core collections. However, both subject areas would benefit from the addition of a music-based reference collection like the one on musicals currently being collected privately by Rex Bunnett and John Muir to be bequeathed to the department.

### 6.1.4. Other performing arts

*Rock 'n' Pop*- these collections include Harry Hammond photographs of pop stars (late 1940s-60s), costumes worn by Mick Jagger, Adam Ant, Kiss etc., Jamie Reid's designs for The Sex Pistols, and Lazaridis' set model for Duran Duran's 1993 tour.

*Circus*- the Museum has the UK's best public holding. It comprises the collections of Antony Hippisley Coxe, Cyril Mills, Larry Turnbull posters and Baron de Rakoczy's photographs of the 1920s-50s.

*Puppetry*- the collection includes rare Victorian Tiller-Clowes and Barnard marionettes, the Gair Wilkinson marionettes, the British Puppet Guild Collection (mid-20<sup>th</sup> century) and extensive supporting documentation compiled by Gerald Morice. A recent acquisition is the archive of Punch & Judy material collected by the respected authority on English puppet theatre, George Speaight.

*Pantomime*- this collection includes early Grimaldi prints, scripts, designs by Hugh Durrant and others, a star trap, costumes for Victorian Harlequin, pantomime dame and cow, and a large collection of pantomime scripts produced for the Howard and Wyndham circuit between the 1940s and 1970s.

*Revue, Cabaret*- this includes C B Cochran's scrapbooks, the archives of Chauve Souris, André Charlot, Douglas Byng, the Windmill Theatre and designs by Oliver Messel and others, costumes for Murray's and Eve's cabaret clubs.

*Music Hall, Variety*- this includes many music sheets, images and business records for the Alhambra (Alfred Moul Collection) and the circuit managed by the London Pavilion Company.

*Theatre Buildings, Technology*- includes a collection of ca. 10,000 building plans by Frank Matcham & Co., Colin Sorensen's buildings files, Strand's photographs and historic lighting equipment, Frederick Bentham's (lighting control) Archive, and the Association of British Theatre Technicians' interviews with practitioners.

## 6.2 Further reading

Croft, S et al., *Black and Asian Performance at the Theatre Museum: A Users' Guide* (London, 2003)

Dorney, Kate. 'The Ordering of Things: Access, Allure and Archives', *Shakespeare Bulletin* (2010, 28.1.), pp. 19-32

Dorney, Kate. 'New Theatre & Performance Display at the V&A, March 2009', [www.theatrevoice.com](http://www.theatrevoice.com)

Dorney, Kate and Jill Evans, 'Focus on Video: The National Video Archive of Performance at the V&A', [www.theatrevoice.com](http://www.theatrevoice.com), December 2009

Evans, Jill. 'Recording Theatre for Education', *Viewfinder* (March 2008. No. 70)

Fowler, James. 'Collecting live performance', *Museums and the Future of Collecting*, edited by Simon J. Knell, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Aldershot, 2004), pp.242-9.

Hall, Catherine. 'Introduction' to Schouvaloff, Alexander. *Theatre Museum* (London, 1987), pp.5-9.

Laver, James. 'Gabrielle Enthoven O.B.E. and the Enthoven Theatre Collection', *Studies in English Theatre History in Memory of Gabrielle Enthoven* (London, 1952), pp. 1-8.

Scott Rogers, Jean. *Stage by Stage. The making of the Theatre Museum* (London, 1985)

## 7. CONTEMPORARY COLLECTING STRATEGY

### 7.1. Scope, history and standing of the Museum's Contemporary collection

The Museum collects a broad range of contemporary design and visual arts. It includes objects ranging from the unique crafted artefact to the item of mass consumption and production. The arguments of this section of the Collecting Plan concern all of curatorial departments.

When first set up as the 'Museum of Ornamental Art' in 1852, the embryonic V&A acquired a selection of casts and other teaching aids, transferred from the 'School of Design' (later to become the RCA), and £5,000 worth of purchases of British and foreign articles of contemporary manufacture from the Great Exhibition of 1851. The aim was to improve the design of manufactured goods by showing contemporary as well as historic specimens 'to illustrate the history of various manufactures' – some for outstanding skill of manufacture or workmanship, others to present to the manufacturer and to the public choice examples of what science and art had accomplished in manufactures of all kinds.

These were mainly contemporary holdings, but they were quickly supplemented by the acquisition of fine examples of Medieval and Renaissance art by J C Robinson, then curator of the Museum. For the next 100 years the Museum's resources were concentrated on historic collections. A few contemporary objects were acquired – the Donaldson Gift (of Art Nouveau furniture in 1900) is particularly noteworthy – but there was no consistent Museum-wide effort to make late 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-century collections representative. Instead the Circulation Department, which developed touring exhibitions for the regions, actively collected both 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-century material. Finding that objects of recent manufacture were of greatest relevance for the students of colleges to which their shows were circulated, the Department gradually assumed responsibility for the full range of the Museum's 20<sup>th</sup>-century collections. It was only on the closure of the Circulation Department in 1977 that the majority of the 'materials' or 'cultures' departments began to submit their 20<sup>th</sup>-century collections to the same critical and scholarly review as the earlier collections and to set about giving them significant shape.

From 1982 to 1986 the V&A collaborated with the Conran Foundation to develop the 'Boilerhouse', which brought a new dimension to the V&A with exhibitions of current manufactures of a kind which fell largely outside the existing scope of the Museum. A young audience, keen for explorations of recent developments in product design, was secured. After the Foundation moved its activities to Butler's Wharf (the Design Museum), debates about the V&A's contemporary role intensified.

Since then the Museum has reasserted the centrality of its role in representing contemporary design both to serve the creative industries and to provide inspiration for all audiences. The

Museum's Contemporary Team, formed in 2002, continues to lead an active and innovative programme of displays, installations, events and exhibitions featuring contemporary art and design. In 2007, the Museum opened the Porter Gallery – the hub of the contemporary programme. Offering a wide range of exhibitions, it brings the best of today's visual culture from around the world to the Museum. Spanning all aspects of art and design including fashion, furniture, product design, craft, graphic design, digital media, architecture and photography, the contemporary exhibition programme considers the inter-relationships between these forms. In addition, the Museum continues to appoint a joint V&A/Brighton University Research Fellow in product design.

No other institution collects recent and contemporary art and design across such a broad front. Some parts of the collection are paralleled elsewhere, although often to different ends. The Crafts Council's 'national collection of craft' is intended only for loan to other bodies and serves a purpose analogous to the loan collection of the Arts Council England which co-exists satisfactorily with the relevant national museum collections. The Design Museum deals only with the design development, production and marketing of mass manufactured artefacts. The British Museum's collections of 20<sup>th</sup> century ceramics, glass and metalwork are of a very high quality but they are limited in range and depth compared with the holdings of the V&A, and have not typically included current work. By agreement with Tate in 1983 we do not currently collect large-scale sculpture produced after 1914, or British and European oil paintings except when associated with architecture, design and the decorative arts. The V&A is working actively with all these institutions to ensure that our respective endeavours work to mutual advantage.

Our contemporary collecting reflects what is new, what is influential, what is innovative or experimental, and what is representative of contemporary social and artistic trends. Every artefact acquired is the result of a creative process and is culturally significant. There are obvious important specialist areas within the collection, detailed in the departmental plans above, and we maintain and develop their unique focus. However, our contemporary collecting also covers new areas of practice as they emerge – interactive design and digital design, for example, or new technological and material developments as they impact on material culture. It also reflects the culture of cross-fertilization found in contemporary practice.

The Museum's strategy therefore aims to mirror the cross-disciplinary and multi-faceted nature of contemporary practice. Fashion, architecture and design, for example, are becoming more closely related, and designers may be working in a variety of specialist arenas at any given time. We reflect the nature of practice in a variety of fields, not limiting ourselves to traditional departmental specialist interests and conventional material and geographic boundaries, but basing our activities, where appropriate, on collaborative research and analysis of current trends.

No collection of this nature can claim to be comprehensive – this is neither possible nor desirable. Collecting is not just an end in itself, but is determined by the functions which we expect the collections to serve. The Museum does aim to demonstrate the full context of



contemporary design. To do this, we document the broad spectrum of professional design practice, collect finished objects and record the contexts of their consumption.

When we deem a particular individual or company to be worthy of collection, we address how best to represent them – an interview, a digital visual archive, a selection of works, or a case study of the design process may all be considered. When our collecting ‘starts with’ the finished product we also aim to assemble a wide range of supporting material – including for example, design drawings, models, prototypes and material samples, recorded interviews with the artist, craftsperson, designer or company, corporate literature, trade catalogues, information on the manufacture and dissemination of products, market research, point of sale material and so on. With this approach, we may collect fewer artefacts, but provide a detailed context for each one. Equally, we do not always adopt ‘the ideal specimen’ approach, but archive a range of contexts for design instead. In the past collecting has primarily been achieved through purchases and gifts direct from manufacturers and artists. Now, however, to reflect trends in consumer behaviour, we document the patrons/agents of new work, buy ‘best sellers’, or invite outside specialists to make a selection for us, as a means of determining contemporary opinion. The contemporary object will not always be the pristine product from the gallery or shop shelf.

The ‘collected object’ is not always a finished product. Contemporary design can include the experimental and conceptual, and we document such activities and events through written and visual sources and gallery or web-based projects. Equally we can provide the venue for a creation of experimental work, the equivalent of purchasing a commissioned piece by a maker.

Our collecting represents a variety of markets for design – the home, the high street, the commercial client and the specialist gallery or collector. As well as collecting works by internationally renowned designers, we reflect design trends in social, economic and other contexts. Similarly, we aim to represent the global nature of culture and practice and to chart the work of British-born and British-based practitioners.

## 8 AFRICA COLLECTING STRATEGY

The African collections at the V&A were given new prominence by the African Diaspora research project, which was part of the wider Capacity Building and Cultural Ownership project the Museum undertook with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2005–8. In the course of this project, 4300 objects made in Africa or with a strong African connection were identified, including many exceptional items that are on display in the Museum's galleries, but not under an African rubric. These and other objects have been made accessible through the Hidden Histories<sup>7</sup> pages on the V&A website, created by the HLF-funded research fellow, Helen Mears, and launched in 2008.

This outstanding body of material exists despite the regular transfer of African objects to other institutions over the whole of the V&A's history. These objects were de-accessioned because the Museum did not see collecting African art and design as part of its role. A major exception was the art of North Africa (Morocco to Egypt) in the Islamic period, which has always been collected as part of what we now call Islamic art. Since 2002 these collections have been the responsibility of the Middle Eastern section in the new Asian Department.

Other exceptions exist, most notably in the Word and Image Department. These two sections, Prints and Photographs, have the status of national collections in the fields of modern prints and the art of photography. This has led the curators there to include works from Africa and the African Diaspora in their collecting as a matter of course. As a result, WID has led the way in collecting in these areas for more than 20 years.

As a result of the African Diaspora research project, however, the V&A as a whole must now conceive of itself as the guardian of a significant collection of Africa-related art and design. An Africa Curators Group was established in January 2009 with the task of co-ordinating the Museum's approach to this material and to develop a curatorial programme for its development.

The co-ordination and development of the Museum's Africa-related collections will enhance what the V&A has to offer in particular to visitors of African and African-Caribbean origin, given the huge contribution of Africans and African Americans to contemporary culture. But the stories to be told will be of interest to all the Museum's visitors.

The term 'Africa-related art and design' will be interpreted very broadly. As well as work done in Africa, acquisitions will include work done elsewhere by Africans or people of African descent, i.e. by the African diaspora. This diaspora has had a profound effect on the non-African world,

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<sup>7</sup> Hidden Histories was created by Helen Mears, an HLF-funded research fellow, and launched in 2008. Please see [http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/periods\\_styles/hiddenhistories/index.html](http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/periods_styles/hiddenhistories/index.html)

and acquisitions will also show the impact of African ideas on the work of non-Africans. Acquisitions will also encompass work done for Africans by others, as in the case of British printed cottons made for the African market, for example.

In enhancing its Africa-related collections, the V&A will avoid duplicating the activities of other national institutions as far as possible. This can be achieved by developing the collection along lines that reflect the distinctive role of the V&A, following the precedent set by the Prints and Photographs sections.

We will develop our existing historical collections primarily through gallery-, publication- and web-based projects rather than through collecting. The exception is North Africa, for which the Museum will continue to expand both its historical and its contemporary collections along the same lines as Asia.

For the rest of Africa, for the African diaspora and for the African impact on non-African art and design, we will concentrate collecting activity in 20th-century and contemporary design, graphic arts, photography, performance arts and other fields for which the V&A holds a nationally recognized remit.

For the most part, we will avoid collecting work that is primarily representative of regional traditions and practices. Rather, we will aim to demonstrate Africa's position within – and contribution to – a global culture of art and design. We will seek to acquire work that is innovative, original and exemplary, with an emphasis on examples that push the boundaries of methods and materials, and areas of practice in which the fine and applied arts intersect. It is accepted that this approach will generate greater collecting activity in some media than in others.

Where it is appropriate to display historic or modern traditional African objects in the Museum, this can be achieved through partnership with other institutions. The way forward in this respect is indicated by the display on the Abuja pottery in colonial Nigeria in the new Making Ceramics Gallery. Two types of material were used in this display. Firstly, wares made at the pottery training centre were acquired by the V&A, on the grounds that these have direct relevance to international developments in studio ceramics. Secondly, wares representing the traditional pottery types from the region, displayed to provide wider context, came in on loan from the British Museum.

Collecting Africa-related materials will not be treated as 'a thing apart' but will be integrated into the collections plans of individual departments. There will therefore be no Museum-wide wish list of Africa-related acquisitions. Such data will appear in the departmental plans. Collecting this material will, though, be articulated and supported through the Africa Curators Group.

## Appendix 1.0 Acquisition and Disposal Policy –

### Extract from the V&A Collections Management Policy 2009

#### Acquisition and Disposal

##### 1 Scope of the collections

###### 1.1 Object Types

The V&A collects objects illustrating and documenting the history of art and design as exemplified in, amongst others, the fields of books, ceramics, drawings, fashion, furniture, glass, jewellery, manuscripts, metalwork, miniatures, paintings, performing arts, photography, prints, sculpture, silver, tapestries, textiles, toys, watercolours and woodwork. In acquiring objects, the Museum is influenced by its existing collections, but it must always be alive to the possibility of acquiring new types of object resulting from technological and social developments. The Board of Trustees requires that detailed collecting plans for the Museum's collections will be presented from time to time for approval.

###### 1.2 The Collection Departments of the Museum

- Asian
- Furniture, Textiles and Fashion
- Sculpture, Metalwork, Ceramics and Glass
- Word & Image
- Theatre & Performance
- V&A Museum of Childhood

###### 1.3 Geographical Boundaries

Objects are collected from all major artistic traditions. The Museum does not normally collect pre-European settlement material from the Americas and Australasia. The Museum does not collect historic material from Oceania and Africa south of the Sahara.

###### 1.4 Chronological Boundaries

Objects from Europe are collected from 300 AD onwards. There are no time restrictions on objects from East, South and South- East Asia. Pre-Islamic objects from the Middle East are not acquired except for textiles. The V&A continues to be a dynamic force in acquiring contemporary objects from all cultures and it is the policy of the Board of Trustees to allocate money from both the central and department funds to contemporary objects.

###### 1.5 Technological Boundaries

Although objects with mechanical or electronic parts are collected, they are not intended to chart the history of technology. It is therefore not essential for such objects to be in functioning order.

## 1.6 The V&A and other British Institutions

The Museum is the national museum of art and design. In addition, the Board of Trustees recognises that the national heritage is preserved in a network of British museums and other institutions in the public and private sectors. The Museum will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

It sees its responsibility not only in acquiring objects for the V&A but also in stimulating other institutions to acquire objects. It does this through a network of formal and informal agreements with other bodies, including the V&A Purchase Grant Fund Scheme, about the appropriate placement of an object. The Board of Trustees will consider collaborative purchases with other museums.

## 1.7 National Collections

Within the Museum's collection, the following areas are recognised as having individual national status. This recognition is the result of discussion between individual keepers in national museums.

- Architectural Drawings
- Art of Photography
- British Watercolours and Drawings
- Ceramics
- Commercial Graphics (including Posters)
- Computer Art
- Fashion
- Furniture and Woodwork
- Glass
- Jewellery
- Metalwork (including Silver)
- Museum of Childhood at Bethnal Green: the national collection of childhood.
- National Art Library (NAL): within the overall system of the national libraries, the NAL has responsibility for the literature of art and for the Art of the Book.
- Pastels
- Portrait Miniatures
- Sculpture: the national collection of post-classical sculpture to 1914.
- Textiles
- Theatre and Performance

## 2 Acquisition

2.1 Under the National Heritage Act 1983, the Board of Trustees "may acquire (whether by purchase, exchange or gift) any objects which in their opinion it is desirable to add to their collections".

- 2.2 To qualify for inclusion in the collections an object must also meet at least one of the following criteria:

**Aesthetic**

An object should be of great beauty or aesthetic significance; it should be excellent in design or present an elegant solution to a problem of design; it should be a major example of an art form represented in the Museum.

**Technical**

An object should illustrate a significant development of a specific technique; it should exemplify excellence of craftsmanship; it should increase the understanding of the method of construction of a particular class of collected objects.

**Historical**

An object should contribute significantly to the history of the art and design collected by the Museum; it should be a datable work by an important artist or workshop; it should have a significant provenance; it should be associated with an important social, cultural or political event; it should provide evidence of the workings (design, production, marketing) of a specific industry and/or trade; it should be or have been regarded as particularly significant for reasons of style, design or technique.

**Documentary**

An object should throw light on other objects in the collections; it should provide a record of a way of life; it should reflect the taste of a certain period in a particularly evocative manner.

**Completion of Objects**

The Museum aims to acquire any object or parts of objects which complete an object already in the collections.

- 2.3 To qualify for inclusion in the Theatre and Performance collections artefacts should document the history, craft or practice of the performing arts in Britain.
- 2.4 To qualify for inclusion in the collections of the V&A Museum of Childhood artefacts should document the history and culture of childhood.
- 2.5 The Museum will not acquire any biological or geological material.

- 2.6 The Museum recognises its responsibility, in acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and the use of collections will meet the requirements of the Accreditation Standard.
- 2.7 The Museum will exercise due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object unless it is satisfied that it can acquire a valid title to the item in question.
- 2.8 In particular, the Museum will not acquire any object unless it is satisfied that the object has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned, including the United Kingdom) in violation of that country's laws.
- 2.9 In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the Museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The Museum will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.
- 2.10 The Museum will not acquire archaeological antiquities (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the Museum has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures.

Any exception to the above will only be because the Museum is either:

- (i) acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin; or
- (ii) acquiring an item of minor importance that lacks secure ownership history but in the best judgement of experts in the field concerned has not been illicitly traded; or
- (iii) acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin; or
- (iv) in possession of reliable documentary evidence that the item was exported from its country of origin before 1970.

In these cases the Museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

- 2.11 As the Museum holds or intends to acquire human remains from any period, it will follow the procedures in the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums' issued by DCMS in 2005.

- 2.12 The Museum will use 'Spoliation of Works of Art during the Holocaust and World War II period:  
Statement of Principles and Proposed Actions', issued by the National Museum Directors' Conference in 1998, and report on them in accordance with the guidelines.
- 2.13 The Museum will also take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements:
- Physical Condition**  
If necessary conservation measures are not feasible, an object will not normally be acquired.
- Space**  
If suitable space is not available and if public access cannot be guaranteed, an object will not normally be acquired.
- Resources**  
The total cost of an object covering the purchase price, transport and handling charges, costs of conservation, documentation, curation, display and storage should be considered when assessing the acquisition of an object.
- Copyright**  
The copyright owner should be identified, wherever possible, and either copyright assigned to the Museum or a copyright licence obtained.
- 2.14 It is the responsibility of each Keeper to produce and maintain a plan detailing the scope of the collection for which he/she is responsible and describing the current basis for acquiring further objects for the Museum. (See V&A Collecting Plan, 2004).
- 2.15 Acquisitions outside the stated collecting policy will be made only in very exceptional circumstances, and then only after proper consideration by the governing body of the Museum itself, having regard to the interests of other museums.
- 2.16 Responsibility for all acquisitions is delegated by the Board to the Director and by the Director to the Director of Collections. The exercise of judgement on the suitability of objects for each collection is the responsibility of the Keeper of that collection.  
The Keeper will also ensure by consultation, where necessary, with the Director of Collections Services, that the practical implications of each acquisition have been properly considered.
- 2.17 Subject to the limitations cited in Section 4.2.2, the Keeper has discretion to acquire objects by gift or bequest, and by purchase up to the limit (as set from time to time by the Director) of the departmental purchase grant, provided that funds from no source other than the departmental purchase grant are being used. When a purchase involves money from the Central Fund, from Trust Funds, from the Friends or Patrons of the Museum, or from outside funding bodies, including sponsors, authorisation from the Director is required. Purchases over £100,000 require the approval of the Board of



Trustees, on recommendation of the Trustees' Collections Committee. The case for such acquisitions will be prepared by the Keeper in consultation with the Director of Collections. Where a gift or bequest is made subject to any condition it should be referred to the Director of Collections.

- 2.18 Progress on major purchases is monitored by the Director of Collections and reported to the Management Board and Board of Trustees through the Trustees' Collections Committee. Records of all acquisitions will be monitored by the Director of Collections Services who will report annually to the Management Board and to the Board of Trustees through the Trustees' Collections Committee. The periodic Report of the Board to Parliament will include a section drafted by the Director of Collections on the development of the collections over the period since the last report.

### **3 Disposal**

- 3.1 By definition the Museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for society in relation to its stated objectives. The Board of Trustees accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons for disposal must be established before consideration is given to the disposal of any items in the Museum's collection, and will ensure that the disposal process is carried out openly and with transparency.
- 3.2 Under the National Heritage Act 1983, as amended by the Museums & Galleries Act 1992, the Board of Trustees may dispose of an object by sale, exchange or gift, unless specific restrictions apply, only if it falls into one or more of the following categories:
- It is a duplicate of another object.
  - The object is unsuitable for retention and can be disposed of without detriment to the interests of students or other members of the public, i.e. it is no longer relevant or useful to the purpose of the Museum and falls outside the scope of the relevant Collecting Plan.
  - Although not falling into the above categories, an object (including a document) may be given, sold to or exchanged with an institution specified in Schedule 5 to the Museums & Galleries Act 1992 supplemented by subsequent Statutory Instruments (see Appendix 1). Any object may be disposed of in this manner, notwithstanding a trust or condition, subject to the terms of Section 6 of the 1992 Act.
  - The Board may destroy or otherwise dispose of an object if it has deteriorated beyond usefulness for the purposes of the collections, because of damage, physical deterioration or infestation by destructive organisms and if it cannot be conserved or preserved within a reasonable time scale or with the use of available resources. An object may be disposed of in this manner notwithstanding a trust or condition prohibiting or restricting the disposal of the object.

- 3.3 The Board of Trustees, acting on the advice of the Museum's professional staff, may take a decision to return human remains (unless covered by the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums' issued by DCMS in 2005) or objects to a country or people of origin. The Museum will take such decisions on a case by case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that the procedures described in Clauses 4.3.1 , 4.3.4, 4.3.5, 4.3.8 and 4.3.20 will be followed but that the remaining procedures are not appropriate.
- 3.4 The Museum will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item and agreements on disposal made with donors will be taken into account.
- 3.5 Where an object has been acquired with the aid of external funding any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.
- 3.6 When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlines in Clauses 4.3.8 to 4.3.20 will be followed and the method of disposal may be gift, sale or exchange.
- 3.7 In exceptional cases, disposal may be motivated principally by financial reasons. Method of disposal will therefore be by sale and the procedures outlined in Clauses 4.3.8 to 4.3.14 and 4.3.20 will be followed. In these cases the Museum will not undertake disposal unless it can be demonstrated that the all the following exceptional circumstances are met in full:
- the disposal will significantly improve the long-term public benefit derived from the remaining collection,
  - the disposal will not be undertaken to generate short-term revenue (for example to meet a budget deficit),
  - the disposal will be undertaken as a last resort after other sources of funding have been thoroughly explored.
- 3.8 Whether the disposal is motivated either by curatorial or financial reasons, the decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors, including the public benefit, the implications for the Museum's collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. External expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and sources communities and others served by the Museum will also be sought.
- 3.9 Any monies received by the Museum from the disposal of items will be applied for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of

the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from MLA.

- 3.10 The proceeds of a sale will be ring-fenced so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation Standard.
- 3.11 Responsibility for disposal from the collections is delegated by the Board to the Director and by the Director to the Director of Collections. The exercise of judgement on the suitability of objects for disposal is the responsibility of the Keeper of the relevant collection. To maintain an adequate safeguard against injudicious disposal a formal disposal board must consider each case. The Director of Collections agrees the composition and date of the Disposal Board. The Board will be convened by the relevant Curator, and consist of the Keeper of the Collection, a relevant subject specialist, a knowledgeable adviser from a different collection or the Research Department or, if necessary, an outside expert. In addition, the Head of Conservation, where deterioration is the reason for disposal, must agree to disposal. The recommendation of each Disposal Board must be reported to the Director of Collections who will present the result to Collections Group and the Management Board for approval. If the current market value of the disposal is greater than £100,000 it must be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval, on recommendation of the Trustees' Collections Committee.
- 3.12 Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining the item within the public domain, unless it is to be destroyed. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, to accredited museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- 3.13 If the material is not acquired by any accredited museum to which it was offered directly as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of material, normally through an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal, and in other specialist journals where appropriate.
- 3.14 The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other accredited museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the Museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.
- 3.15 The nature of disposal by exchange means that the Museum will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with another accredited museum. The Museum will

therefore ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process.

- 3.16 In cases where the Museum wishes for sound curatorial reasons to exchange material directly with accredited or unaccredited museums, with other organisations or with individuals, the procedures in Clauses 4.3.1, 4.3.4, 4.3.8 and 4.3.11 will be followed as will the procedures in Clauses 4.3.17-4.3.20.
- 3.17 If the exchange is proposed to be made with a specific accredited museum, other accredited museums which collect in the same or related areas will be directly notified of the proposal and their comments will be requested.
- 3.18 If the exchange is proposed with a non-accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, the museum will make an announcement in the *Museums Journal* and in other specialist journals where appropriate.
- 3.19 Both the notification and announcements must provide information on the number and nature of the objects involved both in the Museum's collection and those intended to be acquired in exchange. A period of at least two months must be allowed for comments to be received. At the end of this period, the governing body must consider the comments before a final decision on the exchange is made.
- 3.20 Full records will be kept of all disposal decisions and the items involved and retained in perpetuity within the Museum archive. Proper arrangements will be made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable, in accordance with the SPECTRUM procedure on deaccession and disposal.
- 3.21 Routine disposals from the National Art Library.  
The Keeper of the Word & Image collection is formally authorised to dispose routinely and systematically of material which falls into the following categories, without needing to convene a disposal board to consider individual cases:
- Superseded issues of directories, almanacs, timetables, yearbooks, and similar reference works which are issued on a regular basis, so that previous issues are entirely superseded by successive ones, whose primary focus is not art-related, and whose subject content is such that long-term retention of outdated issues is not felt to be desirable. Directories which relate primarily to the art world, artists, galleries, or museums will normally be kept, as they may be useful to researchers in years to come.
  - Superseded editions of bibliographies and other reference works which are acquired primarily as working tools for the NAL or one of its sections (e.g. national listings of books in print, lists of publishers or booksellers).
  - Duplicate copies of reference material or periodicals, which are acquired for the

Library's working needs but which have served their purpose and are either no longer required, or superseded by later issues.

- 3.22 Titles for disposal must be approved by the Keeper and a list of such titles must be maintained. Disposal cycles will be recorded on the NAL catalogue.

## Appendix 2.0 Acquisition through long-term borrowing

The Museum has had a long history of both lending and borrowing long term, but in recent years it has been the Museum's policy to restrict in-coming loans and to accept them only in exceptional circumstances. Occasionally we borrow items that are of exceptional national or international importance or which are particularly required for a planned display. When possible, loans are negotiated that include agreement to give, bequeath or sell items to the Museum after an agreed period. Loans from other public collections, however, are considered differently and in recent years the Museum has been active in promoting reciprocal loans where appropriate, to ensure the liveliest public access to the national collections. In certain circumstances also, loans are accepted with the intention not only of showing exceptional treasures, but of ensuring that owners such as churches or religious orders can provide public access and avoid the pressures of insurance or special environmental provision that might encourage them to sell.

We do borrow items of exceptional importance for a planned display. Such carefully placed loans may eventually lead to acquisition on advantageous terms for the Museum. The enamelled English 12th-century Balfour Ciborium was acquired in 1981 after being on loan for 50 years, and the 14th-century Wingfield Digby Ivory Crozier had been on deposit at the Museum since 1930 when it was acquired through the acceptance in lieu of tax scheme in 2002. Other loans, such as the kings from the Bristol High Cross (National Trust), the statues of Queen Eleanor from the Waltham Eleanor Cross (Hertfordshire County Council), ensure that important 'heritage' items otherwise threatened by weathering or unsuitable environments are preserved in Museum conditions. We have a substantial number of pieces of ecclesiastical plate on loan from churches across the country. In the modern arena, the loan by the P&O Makower Trust of commissions from young silversmiths has regularly brought new work to the displays of contemporary silver since 1980.

## Appendix 3.0 National Collections and Expert Advice

### 3.1. The Museum's collections having national status are:

- Architectural Drawings
- Art of Photography
- British Watercolours and Drawings
- Ceramics
- Commercial Graphics (including Posters)
- Computer Art
- Fashion
- Furniture and Woodwork
- Glass
- Jewellery
- Metalwork (including Silver)
- Museum of Childhood at Bethnal Green: the National Collection of Childhood
- National Art Library (NAL): within the overall system of the national libraries, the NAL has responsibility for the literature of art and for the Art of the Book
- Pastels
- Portrait Miniatures
- Sculpture: the national collection of post-classical sculpture to 1914
- Textiles
- Theatre and Performance

### 3.2. Expert Advice

The Keepers, Deputy Keepers and other senior curators of the Asian, Furniture, Textiles & Fashion, Sculpture, Metalwork, Ceramics & Glass, Word & Image, and Theatre & Performance Departments and the Directors of the Museum of Childhood are expert advisors to Government and act regularly as advisors to a number of government departments, quangos, and charitable funding bodies. This includes work for the DCMS Export Licensing Unit and their Reviewing Committee, and advising on pre-eminent items conditionally exempt from inheritance tax for the Capital Taxes Office. We also provide advice to the Purchase Grant Fund administered by the V&A for the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) and the Inland Revenue Capital Taxes Office, including HM Customs and Excise, the Department of Trade and Industry, the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the Heritage Lottery Fund and The Art Fund. Staff are also frequently called upon to advise organisations such as the National Trust, English Heritage and the Historic Royal Palaces Agency, as well as museums and country houses and private collectors in the UK and abroad and to advise public and private institutions in the countries covered by their collections.

## Appendix 4.0 List of Transferors and Transferees (extract from the Museums and Galleries Act 1992)

### SCHEDULE 5

#### TRANSFERS TO AND FROM CERTAIN COLLECTIONS

#### PART I

#### TRANSFERORS AND TRANSFEREES

The Board of Trustees of the Armouries

The British Library Board

The Trustees of the British Museum

The Trustees of the Imperial War Museum

The Board of Governors of the Museum of London

The Board of Trustees of the National Gallery

The Board of Trustees of the National Galleries of Scotland

The Board of Trustees of the National Library of Scotland

The Trustees of the National Maritime Museum

The Board of Trustees of the National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside

The Board of Trustees of the National Museums of Scotland

The Board of Trustees of the National Portrait Gallery

The Trustees of the Natural History Museum

The Board of Trustees of the Science Museum

The Board of Trustees of the Tate Gallery

The Board of Trustees of the Victoria and Albert Museum

The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Added by Statutory Instrument No.2955 with effect from 23 Nov 2000



## PART II

### TRANSFEREES ONLY

The Court of Governors of the National Library of Wales

The Council of the National Museum of Wales

The Trustees of the Ulster Museum

The Trustees of the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum

The Board of Trustees of the National Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland<sup>9</sup>

Historic Royal Palaces<sup>8</sup>

The National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Added by Statutory Instrument No.613 with effect from 1 Apr 1998.

## Appendix 5.0 Object Types

The following pages give a further breakdown of the constituent parts of the collections. They attempt to define the current collections' strength and the priority currently given to collecting in each area.

### Definition of Codes

#### Current Collections' Strength

0 = out of scope (closed collection)

1 = minimal level, outline of subject only represented

2 = basic informational level; materials that serve to introduce and define a subject

3 = instructional support or study level; adequate to support sustained independent study

4 = research level; collection includes material required for independent research

5 = comprehensive level; 'special collection' with the aim if not the achievement of exhaustive representation

#### Collecting Priority

0 = closed collection

1 = exceptional acquisitions only

2 = occasional acquisitions

3 = regular acquisitions

4 = active priority with regular acquisitions, including acquisition of collections

- = emphasis on contemporary collecting

## Appendix 5.1. Asian Department

Region	Type or period	Strength	Priority
<b>South Asia</b>			
South Asian	sculpture post-AD 200	4	2
South Asian	architectural elements and fragments (stone and wood)	3	1
South Asian	paintings, prints and drawings	5	2
South Asian	photography	4	2
South Asian	textiles	5	3
South Asian	dress	5	3
South Asian	metalwork	4/5	2
South Asian	arms and armour	4/5	1
South Asian	jewellery	4/5	2
South Asian	furniture	4	2
South Asian	modern material (1920-1980)	3	3
South Asian	contemporary material (1980- )	3	4
<b>South-East Asia</b>			
SE Asian	sculpture & architecture	4	2
SE Asian	paintings, prints & drawings	1	1
SE Asian	textiles & dress	4	2
SE Asian	metalwork (inc: arms, armour & jewellery)	4	2
SE Asian	furniture & woodwork	3	2
SE Asian	modern & contemporary	2	2
<b>Himalayas</b>			
Himalayan	sculpture & architecture	3	1
Himalayan	paintings	3	1
Himalayan	textiles & dress	3	2
Himalayan	metalwork (inc: arms, armour & jewellery)	4	2
Himalayan	furniture & woodwork	2	1
Himalayan	modern & contemporary	1	2

Region	Type or period	Strength	Priority
<b>China</b>			
Chinese	archaeological material (bronzes, jades, ceramics)	3	1
Chinese	ceramics post-AD 200	5	2
Chinese	jade and other carvings	4	2
Chinese	textiles	3	2
Chinese	dress	4	2
Chinese	furniture	5	2
Chinese	lacquer	5	2
Chinese	paintings, prints and drawings	4	2
Chinese	modern material (1920-1980)	4	4
Chinese	contemporary material (1980- )	1	3
<b>Korea</b>			
Korean	archaeological material	2	0
Korean	ceramics	3	1
Korean	dress		
Korean	textiles	1	3
Korean	paintings, prints & drawings	1	3
Korean	furniture	1	1
Korean	lacquer	2	3
Korean	modern and contemporary material (1950- )	2	4
<b>Japan</b>			
Japanese	ceramics	3	2
Japanese	textiles	3	1
Japanese	dress	3	2
Japanese	prints & drawings	5	4
Japanese	books (pre-1868)	4	0
Japanese	paintings	2	0
Japanese	inro	5	1
Japanese	lacquer	5	1
Japanese	netsuke	5	1
Japanese	carving	3	1
Japanese	metalwork	4	1

Region	Type or period	Strength	Priority
Japanese	armour	3	1
Japanese	sword fittings	5	1
Japanese	swords & other weapons	4	1
Japanese	cloisonne	3	1
Japanese	masks	3	1
Japanese	furniture, wood & basketry	2	1
Japanese	sculpture	2	1
Japanese	contemporary studio crafts (1970- )	4	3
<b>Middle East</b>			
Iran	ceramics	5	2
Iran	textiles	5	2
Iran	furniture & woodwork	3	2
Iran	metalwork	4	2
Iraq, Syria & Egypt	ceramics	4	2
Iraq, Syria & Egypt	textiles	3	2
Iraq, Syria & Egypt	furniture & woodwork	3	2
Iraq, Syria & Egypt	metalwork	4	2
Iraq, Syria & Egypt	sculpture	3	1
Turkey	ceramics & glass	5	1
Turkey	textiles	5	1
Turkey	furniture & woodwork	3	2
Turkey	metalwork	3	2
Islamic Central Asia	ceramics	4	2
Islamic Central Asia	textiles	3	1
Islamic Central Asia	furniture & woodwork	3	1

<b>Region</b>	<b>Type or period</b>	<b>Strength</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Islamic Central Asia	metalwork	2	2
Islamic Spain & Northern Africa	ceramics	4	2
Islamic Spain & Northern Africa	textiles	2	2
Islamic Spain & Northern Africa	furniture & woodwork	1	1
Islamic Spain & Northern Africa	metalwork	1	1
Islamic Spain & Northern Africa	sculpture	4	1
Middle East General	modern & contemporary sculpture	1	3

## Appendix 5.2. Furniture, Textiles and Fashion Department

### 5.2.1. Furniture & Woodwork

Object type	Strength	Priority
British Furniture		
Before 1700	4	2
1700-1800	4	2
1800-1900	4	3
Continental and other Furniture		
Before 1700	4	2
1700-1800	3	2
1800-1900	3	2
Furniture (International)		
1900-2000	4	4
Post-2000	4	4
Interior fittings – pelmets etc	3	2
Period rooms	4	1
Chimneypieces and architectural woodwork	4	1
Plaster ceilings and panels	3	0
Architectural models	1	0
Musical instruments	4	1
Clocks and barometers, globes and scientific instruments	3	1
Leather panels	4	1
Boxes, including tea caddies, sewing boxes and paintboxes	4	1
Other small decorative woodwork (treen), including moulds for plaster or metalwork, culinary moulds, birdcages, games boards, looms and spinning wheels	4	1
Shellwork, straw-work and rolled paperwork	4	1
Carriages, sedan chairs and baby carriages	4	0
Washing machines, fridges and similar products	1	2
Radios, telephones, etc	3	2

## 5.2.2. Textiles

Object type	Strength	Priority
<b>Textiles</b>		
<u>Pharaonic and Coptic textiles from Ancient Egypt and textiles from Pre-Conquest Peru (woven, embroidered)</u>	3	1
<u>Domestic furnishings – wall hangings and panels</u>		
Medieval tapestries	4	1
16 <sup>th</sup> and 17 <sup>th</sup> century English & European embroidered cushion covers and panels	4	1
16 <sup>th</sup> and 17 <sup>th</sup> century tapestries	4	1
18 <sup>th</sup> century tapestries	4	1
19 <sup>th</sup> century tapestries	3	2
Modern tapestries (20 <sup>th</sup> century on)	3	2
Pre-18 <sup>th</sup> century wall hanging and panels (woven and embroidered)	4	2
<u>Domestic furnishings – for curtains, covers, upholstery, etc</u>		
15 <sup>th</sup> to 17 <sup>th</sup> century European furnishing silks (mostly Italy and Spain)	4	1
Pre-18 <sup>th</sup> century bed hangings (embroidered, woven)	4	1
18 <sup>th</sup> century bed hangings (embroidered, quilted, woven printed, patchwork)	4	2
19 <sup>th</sup> century bed hangings	2	2
19 <sup>th</sup> century bed covers including printed, woven, embroidered, quilted and patchwork	4	1
20 <sup>th</sup> century to contemporary bed covers, quilts	3	2
17 <sup>th</sup> century chair covers	4	1
18 <sup>th</sup> century chair covers – upholstered and loose (all techniques)	3	1
19 <sup>th</sup> century chair covers, loose and for upholstery (all techniques)	3	2
20 <sup>th</sup> century and modern chair covers as above	3	2
17 <sup>th</sup> century printed and impressed furnishing panels	3	1
18 <sup>th</sup> century printed curtains or parts of	4	2
19 <sup>th</sup> century printed curtains or parts of and unmade lengths	4	2



<b>Object type</b>	<b>Strength</b>	<b>Priority</b>
20 <sup>th</sup> century to contemporary printed curtains, lengths	4	3
Passementerie	3	3
Table linen	3	3
<u>Floor coverings</u>		
Turkeywork	1	1
Early English knotted carpets	2	1
16 <sup>th</sup> and 17 <sup>th</sup> century English embroidered table carpets	4	1
Pre-19 <sup>th</sup> century Spanish carpets	4	1
18 <sup>th</sup> , 19 <sup>th</sup> century embroidered carpets	3	1
18 <sup>th</sup> century European knotted carpets	3	1
19 <sup>th</sup> century European knotted carpets	3	1
20 <sup>th</sup> century to contemporary carpets (knotted, embroidered, etc)	4	2
Rag rugs	2	2
Linoleum	1	0
<u>Textiles for dress/fashion</u>		
Pre-17 <sup>th</sup> century embroidery for dress	4	1
17 <sup>th</sup> century embroidery for dress	4	1
18 <sup>th</sup> century embroidery for dress	4	1
19 <sup>th</sup> century embroidery for dress	3	2
20 <sup>th</sup> century to contemporary embroidery for dress	3	2
Pre-17 <sup>th</sup> century silks for dress	4	1
17 <sup>th</sup> century silks for dress	4	1
18 <sup>th</sup> century silks for dress	4	2
19 <sup>th</sup> century silks for dress	3	2
20 <sup>th</sup> century silks for dress	3	2
18 <sup>th</sup> century printed textiles for dress	4	2
19 <sup>th</sup> century printed textiles for dress	4	2
20 <sup>th</sup> century to contemporary printed textiles for dress	3	3
17 <sup>th</sup> century lace panels, trimmings	4	1
18 <sup>th</sup> century lace, as above	4	1
19 <sup>th</sup> century lace, as above	4	1
20 <sup>th</sup> century and modern lace	2	2
European embroideries	4	1
<u>Other textiles</u>		
Church furnishings and vestments	3	3

<b>Object type</b>	<b>Strength</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Examples of knitting (flat panels, trial samples) coptic to present	3	2
Examples of sprang	1	0
Examples of knotting	2	2
Macrame	1	0
Pattern books and swatches (all dates)	3-4	2
Dyeing manuals	3	1
Technical manuals	3	1
Point papers	1	1
Embroidery kits	3	1
Embroidery tools	1	1
Knitting equipment	1	1
Knotting equipment	1	1
Embroidered saddles, horsecloths	2	0
Samplers	1	1

### 5.2.3. Costume/Dress/Fashion

**Outdoor wear:** coats, jackets, cloaks, capes, parkas, raincoats, dominoes etc

**Indoor wear:** gowns, robes, dresses, doublets, jerkins, jackets, coats, waistcoats, trousers, breeches, jeans, petticoats, skirts, bloused, shorts, t-shirts etc

**Underwear:** shirts, collars, sleeves, cuffs, shifts, chemises, stays, corsets, hoops, panniers, crinolines, bustles, bras, girdles, slips, petticoats, camisoles, corsets covers, drawers, pants, vests, nightgowns, dressing gowns, pyjamas, garters, stomacher, bodices

**Footwear:** shoes, boots, slippers, pattens, mules, socks, stockings, tights

**Accessories:** hats, berets, bowlers, derbies, cloches, hoods, coifs, nightcaps, tricorne, caps, bonnets, berets, calashes, handkerchiefs, scarves, stoles, shawls, kerchiefs, handbags, purses, bags, reticules, clutches, satchels, umbrellas, parasols and walking sticks, canes

**Fastenings:** buttons, belts, sashes

**Costume jewellery:** necklaces, bracelets, brooches, earrings, mantilla, hair adornments

**Sports clothing:** riding, golf, tennis, skiing, swimming, etc

**Personal grooming:** manicure and toilet sets, false hair pieces, wigs, make-up accessories, wig curlers

**Display items:** historic mannequins

Note: collections of earlier material are scant due to rarity of surviving examples and cost of acquisition. Because of limited purchase funds, areas marked a high priority are not always particularly active.

Object type	Strength	Priority
<b>Costume/Dress/Fashion</b>		
<u>17<sup>th</sup> century, men's &amp; women's</u>		
Outdoor wear	1	4
Indoor wear	2	4
Underwear	2	4
Footwear	1	4
Accessories	3	2

<b>Object type</b>	<b>Strength</b>	<b>Priority</b>
<u>1700 to 1750, men's &amp; women's</u>		
Outdoor wear	1	4
Indoor wear	2	4
Underwear	1	4
Footwear	3	4
Accessories	2	4
Fans	4	1
Sports clothing	1	4
Personal grooming	1	2
<u>1750-1800, men's &amp; women's</u>		
Outdoor wear	1	4
Indoor wear	4	1
Underwear	2	4
Footwear	3	3
Accessories	3	3
Fans	4	1
Fastenings	2	2
Sports clothing	2	4
Personal grooming	1	2
<u>1800-1850</u>		
Mens – all categories	2	4
Women's – all categories	3	4
Fans	4	1
<u>1850-1900</u>		
Men's – all categories	2	4
Womens – outdoor wear	3	3
Indoor wear	3	3
Underwear	3	3
Accessories	3	3
Shawls	4	1
Fans	4	1
Fastenings	3	2
Costume jewellery	3	2
Sports clothing	2	4
Personal grooming	2	2
Display items	2	3

<b>Object type</b>	<b>Strength</b>	<b>Priority</b>
<u>1900-1950, men's and women's</u>		
Outdoor	2	4
Indoor	3	4
Underwear	3	4
Footwear	3	4
Accessories	3	4
Costume jewellery	2	2
Sports clothing	2	4
Personal grooming	2	2
Display items	2	3
<u>1950 to present</u>		
Mens – all categories	3	4
Women's – all categories	4	4
<u>Non-fashionable dress</u>		
East European ethnic dress	3	0
Smocks	3	1
Church vestments	3	1
Baby clothes	3	1
Dolls & dolls' clothes	2	1

## Appendix 5.3. Sculpture, Metalwork, Ceramics & Glass Department

### 5.3.1. Sculpture

Object type	Strength	Priority
Medieval ivories 400-1550	5	2
English medieval alabasters	5	1
Bronzes 1400-1914	5	2
British sculpture 1200-1914	5	3
Italian sculpture 1200-1914	5	2
Plaster casts	5	1
Post-medieval ivories	4	2
European medals	4	2
Sculptor's models	4	2
Early medieval sculpture 500-1200	3	2
French sculpture 1200-1914	3	2
German sculpture 1200-1914	3	2
Netherlandish sculpture 1200-1914	3	2
Spanish sculpture 1200-1914	3	2
Carvings in amber	3	1
Mother-of-pearl	3	1
Architectural fragments	2	1
Carvings in jet	2	1
Rock crystal	2	1
Architectural models	2	0
Contemporary medals	1	3
Waxes	4	2

### 5.3.2. Metalwork

Object type	Strength	Priority
Medieval base metals, silver, church plate, enamels and jewellery up to 1550	5	2
British domestic silver 1550-1660	5	4
British domestic silver 1660-1800	5	4
British domestic silver 1800-1900	5	4
Continental silver 1500-1900 – Germany and Eastern Europe	4	1
Continental silver 1500-1900 – France	3 / 2	1 / 2
Continental silver 1500-1900 – Scandinavia and Baltic States	3 / 4	1
Continental silver 1500-1900 – Italy	3	1
Continental silver 1500-1900 – Netherlands	3	1
Continental silver 1500-1900 – Spain	4	1
Continental silver 1500-1900 – Portugal	3 / 4	1
Continental silver 1500-1900 – Russia	2	1
Church plate – British post-1500	1 / 2	1
Church plate – Continental post-1500	3	1
Judaica (silver, base metals) post-1500	3	2
Base metals: brass, copper and bronze up to 1900	4	2
Base metals: pewter and alloys up to 1900	5	2
Base metals: Sheffield plate	5	1
Base metals: cut steel	4	2
Base metals: 20 <sup>th</sup> and 21 <sup>st</sup> centuries	3	2
Base metals: Ironwork – cast	2	1
Base metals: Ironwork – wrought inc. caskets and keys	5	2
Jewellery, gold boxes and watches 1500-1900	5	4
Jewellery and watches: 20 <sup>th</sup> and 21 <sup>st</sup> centuries	5	4
Local and traditional jewellery	4	1
Clocks (not wooden cases)	4	2
Piqué	5	2
Arms and armour	3	1
Cutlery	4	2
Ormolu	4	1
Metalworking techniques	1	1
Product design	5	1
Electrotypes	5	1

### 5.3.3. Ceramics & Glass

<b>Object Type</b>	<b>Strength</b>	<b>Priority</b>
<u>Ancient and Pre-Columbian pottery</u>		
Egyptian; Greek; Roman ceramics	1	0
Pre-Columbian pottery	1	0
<u>Continental ceramics, 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries</u>		
Hispano-Moresque pottery (inc. tiles and tile panels)	5	1
Italian Maiolica and related tiles and lead-glazed wares	5	2
Dutch, German, Scandinavian tin-glazed ceramics	4	1
French lead-glazed wares and faience	4	1
Central European 'folk' or 'peasant' pottery	3	1
German stoneware	5	2
Continental tiles, tile panels and stoves	4	1
18 <sup>th</sup> century German porcelain	5	2
French porcelain, 18 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> centuries	5	2
Other early continental porcelain: Italian, Swiss, Dutch, Russian	4	2
19 <sup>th</sup> century art pottery and exhibition pieces	5	4
<u>British ceramics, 14<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries</u>		
Medieval and Tudor English pottery	3	1
British 'peasant' pottery and slipwares, 17 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> centuries	4	1
British delftware, 16 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> centuries	5	1
English brown stoneware, 17 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> centuries	5	2
Staffordshire creamware and salt-glaze, 18 <sup>th</sup> century	5	2
Staffordshire industrial pottery, 19 <sup>th</sup> century	5	3
Tiles and tile panels	5	1
Early English porcelain, 1750-1800	5	2
19 <sup>th</sup> century English and Welsh porcelain	4	1
19 <sup>th</sup> century art pottery	5	3
<u>Modern and contemporary ceramics</u>		
British studio pottery	5	4



<b>Object Type</b>	<b>Strength</b>	<b>Priority</b>
International studio pottery	4	2
British industrial pottery	5	4
International industrial pottery	5	3
<u>Enamels</u>		
Limoges enamels	4	1
Later French and German enamels, mainly 18 <sup>th</sup> century	3	1
English painted and printed enamels, mainly 18 <sup>th</sup> century	5	1
19 <sup>th</sup> century and modern enamels	2	1
<u>Plastics</u>	2	2
<u>Glass</u>		
Ancient glass	3	1
Venetian style glass, 15 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> centuries	5	1
Spanish glass, 17 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> centuries	4	1
Northern European coloured, engraved and enamelled glass	5	1
British glass, 16 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup> centuries	5	2
British glass, 19 <sup>th</sup> century	5	3
20 <sup>th</sup> and 21 <sup>st</sup> century British studio glass	5	4
20 <sup>th</sup> and 21 <sup>st</sup> century international studio glass	4	4
20 <sup>th</sup> and 21 <sup>st</sup> century British industrial glass	4	3
20 <sup>th</sup> and 21 <sup>st</sup> century international industrial glass	4	3
<u>Stained Glass</u>		
Medieval British	4	2
Medieval Continental	5	2
Post-medieval: 17 <sup>th</sup> and 18 <sup>th</sup> centuries	3	2
Post-medieval: 19 <sup>th</sup> century	4	2
20 <sup>th</sup> and 21 <sup>st</sup> centuries	3	2

## Appendix 5.4. Word & Image Department

Section / object type	Strength	Priority
Book		
Artists' books	3	3
Bindings	4	3
Book illustration (pre-19 <sup>th</sup> century)	5	1
Book illustration (19 <sup>th</sup> century)	5	1
Book illustration (20 <sup>th</sup> century - )	3	4*
Chapbooks	4	1
Comics	3	3
Electronic books	3	3
Heraldry	4	1
History of publishing	4	2
Magazines	3	3
Manuscripts and illuminated manuscripts	4	1
Rare imprints	4	1
Trade literature	4	3
Visual poetry	4	3
V&A publications	5	4
Design process		
<i>Architecture:</i>		
Architectural drawings (British)	4	1
Architectural drawings (Foreign)	2	1
Design for interiors	4	4
<i>Designs for the Decorative Arts:</i>		
Arms and armour	4	1
Ceramics and glass	4	4*
Furniture (British) pre-1930	4	2
Furniture (British) post-1930	2	4*
Furniture (Foreign)	1	2*
Fashion pre-1900	4	2
Fashion post-1900	4	4*
Metalwork and jewellery (British) pre-1850	5	1
Metalwork and jewellery (British) post-1850	4	4
Sculpture (British) pre-1900	5	1
Sculpture (British) post-1900	1	3*
Stained glass	4	3*
Textiles (British) 18th century	5	2
Textiles (British) 1800-1900	4	1
Textiles (British) post-1900	3	4*
Textiles (Foreign)	3	2*

Section / object type	Strength	Priority
Wallpaper	1	3*
<i>Other:</i>		
Archives relating to British art and design	4	4 where V&A is a last resort
Designs for gardens	1	3*
Designs for graphics and corporate identity	4	4*
Designs for industrial products (inc. transport)	3	3*
Designs for the cinema and theatre	3	0 <sup>10</sup>
<b>Digital Arts</b>		
Computer art and illustration	4	4*
Digital animations	1	2*
<b>Paintings</b>		
Drawings (British)	3	2
Drawings (Foreign)	2	1
Fan leaves	3	1
Icons	1	0
Miniatures (British)	5	4/1
Miniatures (Foreign)	2	1
Murals	2	1
Oil paintings	4	1 <sup>11</sup>
Pastels	3	4/1
Watercolours (British)	5	3
Watercolours (Foreign)	1	1
<b>Photographs</b>		
Fashion photography	4	3
Holography	2	1*
Photographs (pre-1960)	5	4
Photographs (post-1960)	5	4*

<sup>10</sup> These are collected by the Theatre & Performance Department

<sup>11</sup> Only paintings that directly relate to the V&A's collections.

Section / object type	Strength	Priority
<b>Prints</b>		
<i>Commercial Graphics:</i>		
Greetings cards	5	4*
Packaging	2	4*
Posters	5	4*
Printed ephemera	3	3
Trade cards	2	3
<i>Fine Art Prints:</i>		
Artists' wallpapers	2	1
Multiples	1	3*
Prints pre-1600	4	4
Prints 1600-1950	4	2
Prints post-1950	4	4
<i>Illustrative Prints:</i>		
Brass rubbings	3	0 <sup>12</sup>
Costume prints	5	1
Iconographical prints	4	2
Portrait prints	5	3
Social history prints	3	2
Topographical prints	5	3
Botanical/Natural history prints	3	2
Reproductive printmaking	5	1
<i>Printed Designs for the Decorative Arts:</i>		
Ornament prints (to include pattern books)	5	4
Wallpapers	5	4
<i>Other:</i>		
Caricatures	3	2
Maps	1	0
Playing cards	3	1*
Printed designs for decorative papers	3	1
Printmaking processes, tools and materials	5	4*
Prints in historic contemporary frames	3	3
Scrapbooks	2	1

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<sup>12</sup> Unless a better example of an existing one is offered to us.

## Appendix 5.5 Museum of Childhood, Bethnal Green

<b>Section/object type</b>	<b>Strength</b>	<b>Priority</b>	
<b>Archive</b>	4	4	
<b>Clothing</b>			
16 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup> centuries	3	1	
19 <sup>th</sup> century	5	3	
20 <sup>th</sup> century-present	5	3	
<b>Dolls' Houses and miniatures</b>			
17 <sup>th</sup> and 18 <sup>th</sup> centuries	5	1	
19 <sup>th</sup> century	5	2	
20 <sup>th</sup> century-present	4	3	
<b>Ephemera</b>			
Greetings cards	3	2	
Documents	2	2	
Letters/Diaries	1	2	
Scraps	2	2	
<b>Home and Child Development</b>			
Children's Furniture	4	2	
Feeding/rattles	3	2	
Prams	3	1	
Pushchairs	2	1	
Nursery equipment inc. christening gifts etc	3	2	
Medical items	1	1	
<b>Play and Learning:</b>			
<b>Dolls</b>			
Pre-1945	5	2	
Post-1945	5	3	
<b>Games and Puzzles</b>			
Board games	5	3	
Card games	3	2	
Indoor games	3	2	
Outdoor games and toys	2	4	
Puzzles	4	2	

<b>Section/object type</b>	<b>Strength</b>	<b>Priority</b>	
<b>Learning and Development</b>			
Toys and equipment	4	2	
<b>Puppets and Toy Theatres</b>			
Theatres	2	2	
Puppets	1	2	
<b>Soft Toys</b>			
Teddy bears	4	2	
Soft toys	3	3	
Character toys	3	3	
<b>Toys:</b>			
<b>Optical Toys</b>			
Optical toys	3	3	
Computer games	1	4	
Traditional – horses, arks, Christmas	3	3	
Constructional toys	3	2	
Mechanical toys	3	3	
Vehicles	2	3	
Figures	3	2	
<b>Representations of Childhood</b>			
Paintings	1	1	
Drawings/engravings etc	1	1	
Photographs	2	4	

## Appendix 5.6. Theatre & Performance Department

### Core Collections

These incorporate a large number of major acquisitions which, rather than being retained as discrete collections, have been merged and organised according to object types (designs, books, photographs etc.). Collections that have been combined include those of Gabrielle Enthoven and Harry R Beard (mainly playbills, programmes, prints and texts); the libraries of the British Theatre Association, The Society for Theatre Research, Critics' Circle, Vic-Wells Association, the London Archives of the Dance and Cyril Beaumont (ballet), and Antony Hippisley Coxe (circus); the design collection incorporating the holdings of Arts Council and British Council Collections and of the former V&A Circulation Department; and photographic collections including those from Time Out and The Daily Telegraph. They include:

- 1,000 Architectural plans;
- 8,000 Autograph letters;
- 350 Ceramics;
- 2,500 Costumes and accessories;
- 20,000 Designs;
- 250,000 Information files (productions, people, companies, etc);
- 300 Legal documents, account books;
- 1,300 Paintings and drawings;
- Photographs (prints and negatives) in excess of 1,000,000;
- 500,000 Playbills and theatre programmes;
- 10,000 Posters;
- 75,000 Printed books, manuscripts and prompt-books;
- 4,500 Periodicals;
- 21,500 Prints;
- 500 Properties and other 3-dimensional objects;
- 400 Puppets;
- 35 Scenic cloths;
- 150 Silk programmes;
- 5,000 Song sheets;
- 150 Stage machinery and equipment;
- 250 Set models and model theatres;
- 1,250 Tickets / tokens;
- 150 Tinsel prints; and
- 2,500 Video and audio recordings.

### Special Collections

These are ca. 350 discrete collections housed at the Museum's Blythe House store, in Olympia, where access facilities are provided. They are described individually on the Museum's bibliographical catalogue and on the website for *Backstage* ([www.backstage.ac.uk](http://www.backstage.ac.uk)), a

collaborative project designed to provide information about UK holdings of research material relating to the performing arts. The following list is a small sample: English Shakespeare Company Archive; English Stage Company (Royal Court) Archive; Sir Michael Redgrave Archive; London Contemporary Dance Trust Archive; Frank Matcham Collection of Theatre Plans; Unity Theatre Company Collection; Puppet Theatre Guild Collection; Sir Henry Irving Collection; and Windmill Theatre Archive.

### **Educational Handling Collection**

This contains items retained for teaching and handling purposes but not important enough to be added to the Museum's formal collections.

<b>a) Subject Type</b>	<b>Strength</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Dance – Ballet	5	4
Dance – Contemporary	5	4
Drama – London	5	4
Drama – Regional	5	4
Pantomime	5	4
Design	5	4
Theatre buildings/Architecture	5	4
Stage technology	4	4
Circus	4	2
Culturally diverse theatre	4	4
Opera	4	3
Operetta	4	3
Music hall/Variety	4	3
Musical theatre	4	3
Personalities	4	3
Performing arts management /Policy	4	3
Puppetry	4	3
Revue/Cabaret	4	3
Shakespeare	4	3
Experimental theatre/Live art	3-4	3
Mime/Physical/Street theatre	3-4	3
Popular music	3-4	3



<b>a) Subject Type</b>	<b>Strength</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Carnival/Pageants	3	2
Magic	3	2
Music (Classical, Jazz, Country etc.)	1	1
<b>b) Medium / genre</b>		
Archives	5	4
Books / periodicals	5	4
Costumes	5	4
Photographs	5	4
Playtexts & prompt-books	5	4
Posters	5	4
Programmes & reviews & editorial	5	4
Video (NVAP)	5	4
Ceramics	4	2
Juvenile drama sheets	4	1
Paintings	4	1
Prints / drawings	4	2
Oral history	4	4
'Other' video + audio (inc. R Bebb Collection)	4	4
Tickets / tokens	4	2
Dance notation	3	2
Sculpture / furniture / misc. 3-D etc	3	2

## Appendix 6.o National Art Library Policy for the Development of Documentary Materials

### Scope, history and standing of the National Art Library's documentary collections

The National Art Library (NAL) is one of the world's greatest libraries on the applied and decorative arts, and is one of the national collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A). It covers the whole field of art, craft and design, and its holdings today number up to a million items. This policy governs the documentary materials acquired and managed by the NAL, that is, secondary works of a bibliographical nature, in print, electronic and other formats, and a variety of forms of documentation ranging from ephemera and recordings to documentary manuscripts.<sup>13</sup> Works acquired as curatorial objects (bindings, artists' books, illustrated books, fine printing, books significant as historical objects, books remarkable for their design or material aspects, also illumination and calligraphy) are dealt with in Section 4 of the V&A Collecting Plan.

From its inception in 1837 and its establishment as the library in what became the South Kensington Museum after 1851 (from 1899 the V&A), the NAL collected on an international scale. The V&A's mission was to create a link between what the 19<sup>th</sup> century regarded as fine art and the applied arts that would improve the design of British products. The NAL set out to document the development of both areas, and key historic as well as contemporary works were acquired, forming the world-class foundation for the necessarily more selective acquisition programme that continues today. It has great strengths in catalogues of exhibitions, and of auction sales: of the latter it holds the largest individually catalogued – and therefore readily accessible – collection in the UK. In addition, the NAL has unique discrete special collections of a documentary nature, especially in relation to its own foundation and context, e.g. papers and library of Sir Henry Cole; publications of the Great Exhibition of 1851 and other international exhibitions, a complete file of publications issued by the V&A. Manuscript collections include letters, account books and other records of individual artists and the production and marketing of decorative and artistic objects. Extensive Information Files contain ephemeral documentation about artists from the late 20th century on. Two immensely important literary collections bequeathed in the 19th century by Alexander Dyce and John Forster are in some ways anomalous. However they not only bring scholars to the NAL and the V&A from all over Britain and the world, they contextualise their donors' art collections, which also came to the museum; furthermore, Dyce contains resources for the early history of theatre, and Forster – along with the manuscripts of nearly all Charles Dickens's novels – brought to the V&A one of its great treasures: the three notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci.

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<sup>13</sup> This document is heavily based on the first comprehensive collecting policy produced for the library in recent times, *The National Art Library: a policy for the development of the collections*, ed. Jan van der Wateren and Rowan Watson (National Art Library, V&A, 1993)

## Cooperation

It is important to understand that the NAL has always had a concern for art documentation beyond what it could physically collect itself. The great *Universal catalogue of books on art* (London, 1870-75) aimed at compiling a complete collective bibliography of works on art held in all the great libraries of the western world. For purposes of reference and for its core areas, the NAL needs to collect very fully: beyond this, it considers that knowledge about the location of a work can be as useful to researchers as actually possessing it. Further, today this knowledge can often lead to swift delivery by electronic means, transforming the landscape in which collecting takes place. Today the NAL's holdings are discoverable internationally online, not only within its own catalogue but in many large 'union' catalogues, and also on the open internet.

The NAL aims to play a full part in developing frameworks within which there can be shared responsibility for maintaining full documentation about art, craft and design.

London is rich in libraries for the study of art, craft and design. There are various mechanisms for promoting co-operation in the matter of collection development. Among these ARLIS (The Art Libraries Society of Great Britain and Ireland), the Library Committee on the History of Art, and the Palaeography Co-operative Acquisition Committee for Facsimiles, Microforms, Electronic Resources. For books there is regular formal contact with the British Library, and as far as manuscripts and archives are concerned, the NAL has long had regular informal contact with the British Library Department of Manuscripts, with other national, university and local archive repositories and manuscript collections. Whenever collectable material becomes available; co-operation with the Historical Manuscripts Commission, now part of The National Archives, has also been regular. The NAL will always investigate the availability of expensive or specialist works (ie outside its core areas) in libraries within the M25 area and in the UK generally.

The NAL is an active contributor to the UK Research Libraries Network (RLUK), the body set up to lead provision of research information in the UK in the new electronic environment. On the European and international level the NAL catalogue is integrated into ARTLIBRARIES.NET which brings together all the significant art libraries across Europe, North America and Australasia.

Further arrangements for co-ordinating development strategies are being worked out with other libraries in London and beyond, whose subject areas overlap with those of the NAL. Such arrangements will develop as art libraries develop automated catalogues that allow the totality of holdings to be considered as a single, jointly managed resource.

The NAL has taken a leading role in the ARLIS survey of holdings of periodicals relating to art, craft and design, and in the development of the ARLIS.NET directory, which plots the strengths of libraries nationally in their coverage of art, craft and design. The NAL likewise supports initiatives to map the strengths of individual collections throughout the UK.

The NAL is also engaged in negotiations elsewhere to co-ordinate collecting. The library of Tate (Tate Modern and Tate Britain) is strong in post-1945 European art, and in 20<sup>th</sup> century painting generally. The library of the Royal Academy concentrates on works about academicians but also covers painting in Britain from the date of its establishment. The National Gallery Library collects to document European painting from the High Middle Ages to ca.1900 (British painting is covered to a very limited area), though in this case there is no immediate plan for automation. In all these cases, discussions take place to co-ordinate collection development activities.

The NAL's acquisition of British imprint books, which are acquired through legal deposit by the British Library (BL), is generally limited to those essential for reference and access to learning. The NAL and BL have set up a working group to maximise the value of collaboration.

The NAL is involved in the elaboration of principles for legal deposit of electronic publications in the UK, in the wake of recent legislation, and has a role in regard to those electronic publications that relate to art, craft and design.

Automated catalogues are, of course, crucial to the effectiveness with which any library can take its place in a distributed national collection, as are appropriate arrangements for access, retention policies and budgets sufficient to enable appropriate coverage of the agreed field.

### **The NAL and the V&A**

Books and 'library-type materials' are additionally housed in various parts of the V&A. The Theatre Collection has its own library and shares reading room facilities with the NAL and Archive collections at Blythe House. The Museum of Childhood at Bethnal Green has a growing collection of works relating to its collections on childhood. The curatorial departments of the museum (Sculpture, Metalwork, Ceramics & Glass; Furniture, Textiles and Fashion; Asian) each have their own working libraries, as do the the Word & Image Department's collections of Prints and Drawings, Paintings and Photographs. These have been developed since the institution of the materials-based departments in 1908 and the geographically-based departments in the 1970s.

They represent 'working tools' for the subject area in question, and include works that refer to individual objects in their care and to the ways they wish to interpret them. Some specialist areas of the Museum's bibliographical holdings are developed within departments: technical and scientific works are selected and housed in the V&A's Conservation Department library, for instance.

The Museum's aim is for all its bibliographical resources to be included in the NAL's computer catalogue, so that access may be had to all from a single source. Technical measures are also in development museum-wide to provide integrated access to these documentary resources alongside object collections and archives.

## **Selection**

Members of the Collection Development team share the responsibility for selecting across all subject areas of the collection and although the mechanism for selecting new stock is more fully described in procedure manuals, it is worth noting that selection is carried out in the most systematic a way as possible by reviewing a wide range of publishers' and booksellers' information. This information is increasingly in the form of electronic alerts making use of suppliers' ability to pre-select material according to agreed profiles. Selection methods are more fully described in procedure manuals. Publicity materials of publishers and booksellers are scrutinised by those with responsibility for various areas of collecting (by no means all supply details of works available grouped by subject), as are a large number of periodicals, and newsletters. The contribution of the expertise of V&A curators is maintained by liaison between the NAL and Museum departments. Suggestions from colleagues and from the public for additions to NAL stock are actively encouraged.

## **The National Art Library's collecting aims for documentary materials**

The NAL collects to provide comprehensive documentation for the applied and decorative arts, and to support its role in national information provision on art and design. Its collecting will reflect its continuing commitment to scholars, and support information services to students and the diverse public

In the interests of effective use of resources and expertise, the NAL will utilize its relationship with the V&A, and focuses acquisition on what is published world-wide about the subjects represented by the V&A and its collections, that is to say the core subjects of the applied arts, craft and design. It will also continue to collect materials which allow study of the place of the fine arts and material culture in the societies represented in the V&A's collections; however, in these areas, co-operation with other libraries will be vital to ensure appropriate coverage nationally.

The present policy covers mainly new and recent publications; used and out-of-print books are collected only when of importance for the Museum's core subjects – there is no effort to retrospectively complete gaps when any title not in the NAL is known to be publicly accessible in other UK libraries, unless through donation.

## **Level of works collected**

In gathering documentation for the V&A's core subjects and for the history and practice of art, craft and design generally, the NAL collects works which add to knowledge and serious debate. Elementary guides are not usually collected except by way of representative sample. The NAL also considers for acquisition works which help to represent the current range of style and format of material published on art and design, and acquires selectively those which have some elements that add significantly to the documentary resources of the Museum. Art publishing today is characterised at the popular level by books which repackage other works. Many such works are intended for the gift market. Publications of this sort are not normally collected. Instructional manuals for areas such as ceramics, metalwork, architecture or photography are

not normally collected except selectively when they throw light on popular practice or impact significantly upon the work of a major practitioner or movement.

### **Chronological and geographical range**

For societies generally considered to be part of the 'Western tradition', the NAL's collecting focuses on the period from ca.400 CE to the present.

For Europe, works are collected selectively for the Greek and Roman periods, sufficient to document what had a subsequent impact upon Western art and material culture, that is to say Europe and North America. Works relating to Medieval and Renaissance Europe are acquired both for their relevance to the V&A's holdings and for contextual aspects that allow these objects to be effectively presented; where the publication of source materials is concerned (eg archives materials, chronicles), only those that relate to objects of a kind held by the V&A are bought. The same approach, but interpreted in a narrower fashion, governs works acquired for the Early Modern, Modern and Contemporary periods; here, the periods are covered in detail by many other London libraries. However, the needs of students on the V&A/RCA MA courses are borne in mind.

Ancient civilisations that have had a direct impact upon western culture are documented at a basic level, except in the case of East Asia (China, Japan, Korea), South and South-East Asia, and the Middle East – there are V&A departments dedicated to the art and material culture of these areas. Other libraries in London, staffed by librarians with specialist subject and language knowledge, cover these areas. Advice about what the NAL can acquire to supplement these libraries is regularly sought from V&A curators, though significant works are always acquired if they relate to V&A objects and the environments in which they were produced and consumed.

African, Latin-American, native American and Oceanic civilisations are covered at a minimal level, except for modern periods where contact with Western cultures was significant.

### **Languages**

For subject areas that are central to the Museum's purpose, works are collected in all European languages, the criterion being the usefulness and value of the text and images. Subsequent translations into English are acquired for the more important works when there is considered to be no English equivalent, or when the translation includes important new matter.

### **Collecting strengths – introduction**

This document uses the same terms to describe its collecting as the V&A's Collecting Plan (see Appendix 5), and with similar definitions.<sup>14</sup> In order to make the present policy more useful outside the V&A, the terms chosen are those used by the ARLIS survey of collection strengths.

- Minimal Level – outline of the subject

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<sup>14</sup> These were developed by ARLIS for its survey of collections in UK libraries

- Basic Information Level – materials that serve to introduce and define a subject
- Study Level – supporting sustained independent study
- Research Level – materials that allow current research to be followed in some depth, without seeking to supply comprehensively published primary materials
- Comprehensive Level – materials that allow fullest research, with all significant works actively sought out.

The NAL's areas of collecting can be defined as:

**'Access to Learning' Collections**, with works that document, and maintain a current awareness in, the whole field of the fine arts, the applied and decorative arts, craft and design, both for the serious beginner and those with extended knowledge in some aspect of the field, including contextual and basic reference material.

**Core Collections**, with works on the applied arts and decorative arts that are central to the Museum's purpose and reflected in the names of its material-based curatorial departments (the geographically-based Asian Department contains similar classes of artefact). The Core Collections may be divided into those serving subjects for which there is a relatively small amount of publishing, and those characterised by publishing in bulk. In the latter case, strict criteria regarding quality, originality and usefulness have to be brought to bear in selection.

### **Access to Learning Collections**

These provide a basic bibliography of art, craft and design, one that is international in scope. Included are works that allow an overview of the subject area, and allow access to the way that it is and has been studied, and to what can be termed 'the current state of knowledge'. A small part of these collections will be made available as a browsing library for both casual readers and those who come for concentrated study.

Under this rubric are collected:

- reference works for art, craft and design;
- encyclopaedias, bibliographical and subject-based dictionaries (in all languages);
- works about the societies which have produced the kinds of objects found in V&A collections;
- works that provide a historical or other framework for presenting V&A collections;
- works about past and contemporary societies (of an historical, anthropological, or sociological nature) which have influenced the way in which any period is considered;
- works about the way objects are marketed and consumed, from studies of the advertising industry to investigation of shopping and its history.

### **Core Subject Collections**

The core subjects are those defined by the artefacts that form the foundation collections of the Museum. These subjects are reflected in the names of V&A material-based departments. The artefacts, of a similar kind, found in the geographically-based Asian Department, extend the

scope of the core subjects outside Western Europe and the Americas to India and South-East Asia, East Asia and the Middle East. The names of the branch museums similarly indicate another dimension to the core collections. The name of the material-based departments and branch museums indicate the following subject areas:

Sculpture (up to 1900)

Metalwork (including silver and jewellery)

Ceramics

Glass

Furniture

Textiles

Fashion

Word & Image (paintings, designs, photographs, prints and books)

Theatre Studies

Childhood

The word 'Art' today is largely conceived of as painting rather than the applied and decorative arts; painting and to a lesser extent sculpture attract most attention by publishers. The following account of subject areas in which the NAL collects makes a division between those subjects on which little is published, and those where selection is made according to the criteria discussed above (ie contributing to the advance of knowledge and supporting contemporary debate).

Works on the following subjects, whether considering historic, modern or contemporary periods, are collected to comprehensive level.

#### **Applied and Decorative Arts (historic, modern and contemporary)**

Ceramics

Furniture

Glass

Jewellery

Metalwork

Sculpture to ca.1900

Textiles

Every publication produced by, or in association with, the V&A itself, including gallery trails, exhibition guides, newsletters etc., is acquired, usually in two or more copies. Publicity material such as 'What's On' guides, course prospectuses etc. are not collected by the NAL (but are archived).

A great amount is published about the following subjects, a large proportion of it in glossy format, 're-packaged' and derivative in nature; strict quality controls are applied in these areas. Works in the following areas are collected on a selective basis to a comprehensive level.



## **Architecture**

The NAL collects selectively works on architecture. Emphasis is placed on works that discuss the subject in the wider context of art history, reflecting the influence of architecture on artistic movements, ornament, design and the development of taste. Areas to be collected will include:

- works discussing architecture from a design point of view;
- architecture and interior design;
- architecture and artistic movements;
- philosophy of architecture;
- architecture and society;
- urban environment;
- monographs on major historic architects;
- monographs on contemporary architects who have had a wider influence on contemporary design.

## **The Book**

For policy on collecting *examples* of the art of the book, see the V&A Collecting Plan, section 4. Works on these subjects are collected to comprehensive level when they relate to design aspects rather than the actual technology of production. Catalogues and bibliographies are collected only when they relate to the holdings of the NAL.

## **Contemporary Art (from painting to installations)**

Works on applied and decorative arts that can be called contemporary are collected comprehensively. It is not possible, in practice, to cut off the fields of design and craft from the contemporary practice of art, so that works about current activities comprehended by the notion of 'art' are collected to study level, though works that relate to objects and activities within the V&A are collected to research level.

Works about the practitioners who condition the contemporary art scene across the world are collected to study level, the emphasis being upon those which are likely to have a permanent value and which are significant indicators of the 'art scene' as a whole. Works on artists who use video, digital media and holography are collected selectively to support the V&A's holdings of such materials. No attempt is made to document the entirety of contemporary art practice.

## **Design (historic, modern and contemporary)**

### **General**

The NAL collects to a comprehensive level material covering all aspects of design, from graphic and industrial design to product and interior design. However, the collection focuses primarily on designers and design movements that have had a significant influence on the decorative arts. Particular emphasis is placed on design principles, elements, styles and decorative motifs, as well as design as it is experienced by urban populations in the industrialised world, from guidance systems in transport to window dressing.

### Graphic Design

Works are collected to a comprehensive level on the subject both as an art form and as a marketing tool, particularly in the field of publishing and packaging; includes promotional design, advertising, packaging, editorial design and motion graphics

### Interior Design

Works are collected to a comprehensive level on the history and current practice of interior design in all its aspects, particularly those on successful designers and practices, and materials that have had major influences on the way it is, and has been, carried out.

### Landscape Design

Works collected very selectively, as an adjunct to works on architecture and interior design.

### Product design

Works on the background of commonly-available products in industrialised societies, from the conception to the marketing and distribution, are collected to research level. In some cases this provides documentation for objects held by the V&A, in others it provides a surrogate for the 'original'.

### Production and TV design

Works are collected very selectively: only major works that relate this area to the wider field of design.

### **Fashion**

The NAL's collecting, to a comprehensive level, focuses on the theory and history of costume, trends and periods, key designers and contemporary fashion. Particular attention is paid to the business aspects of marketing fashion, and to the fashion 'counter-culture' in industrialised societies. Accounts of commercial and student fashion shows are also collected. Material about accessories, makeup/body art, hairstyles and stage costume is collected to study level only.

### **Painting (historic and modern)**

Painting, in Western society, has always served to define notions of art; it is a subject of major importance to a museum of Art and Design that defines itself as a prime source of inspiration for the creative industries and the study of visual culture. The practice of painting has always been related to the need to furnish interiors and provide spaces with consciously or unconsciously constructed messages relevant to the environment in which they operated.

The V&A houses a major collection of paintings, works given partly in support of its educational mission and partly to form the nucleus of a Collection of British Painting. When the Museum was founded its goal was to apply art to the products of industry, and paintings were a major resource for study. The V&A houses the National Collection of Painting in Watercolour, so that works on this subject are collected at a comprehensive level, as are works on fresco and mosaics, both revived in the 19<sup>th</sup> century for decorative purposes.

The NAL collects works on painting to study level, but aims to be more comprehensive in the following cases:

- works on painters and movements represented in its collections;
- works on painters who had or have a particular significance for interior design or for their engagement with industry;
- works on painters influential on the way the arts in general were seen and discussed at any particular period, particularly those associated with movements that encompassed the applied and decorative arts;
- works on techniques that document major methods of painting practice, methods exemplified in V&A objects; these include illumination, wall painting and fresco, tempera, oil-painting, acrylics.

### **Photography**

The NAL collects to support the V&A's collection of Photography as Art. It collects to research level works on the history of photography. It collects works about or containing the images of photographers represented in the V&A's collection, and a restricted number of such works about other photographers, according to their perceived importance in the field.

Works about the applications of photography to industry, in particular photo-reportage, are collected to research level (see also Graphic Design).

### **Formats**

#### General

Works are collected in the form of monographs, periodicals and other formats including documentary manuscripts, and multimedia publications. Although new stock is predominantly in print format electronic resources are being increasingly acquired, these include: CD, DVD, online subscriptions and most recently e-books.

#### Sales Catalogues

The catalogues produced by the major auction houses in Europe and North America are added to the NAL's stock. Others are added to stock when they concern objects that relate to those held in the Museum.

#### Exhibition catalogues.

For the most part, these are treated like monographs and added to stock on the basis of their significance for subjects served by the NAL. The NAL actively seeks out catalogues of exhibitions from a number of galleries. By an arrangement with the BL, British exhibition catalogues received as part of the Legal Deposit scheme which would not normally be individually catalogued by the BL are passed to the NAL, where they are catalogued to agreed standards and held as a marked collection on behalf of the BL. The BL retains all the published catalogues of some 60 galleries and museums according to a list agreed with the NAL.

### Periodicals

Much of the documentation collected by the NAL comes in the form of periodical publications. The range of titles is constantly monitored and compared to that of other libraries in London and beyond, with a view to minimising duplication. New titles are normally added to stock only when the title concerns a core V&A subject, though a decision is always made in the light of the title's availability in London.

### Information Files

Ephemera and minor publications that relate to individual artists, designers and craftspeople, or to events or organisations that have significance for the Museum's core subjects, are kept in Information Files. These are described on the computer catalogue in simple records (usually no more than a name, personal or institutional). They also include statements by the makers of objects acquired by the department. This mechanism allows documentation that is not published in the conventional sense of the term to be compiled and made available. Procedures for making up such files are intended to ensure that only material that does not duplicate what is easily available in hard copy or automated format is included.

The Information Files include material compiled by individuals outside the Museum, the most notable example being the working files of Edward Lucie-Smith, acquired by the NAL in 1991. Some curatorial departments of the V&A send material for the NAL's Information Files in order to make publicly available documentation gathered in the course of the management of their collections.

### Ephemera

There are twice-yearly trawls of ephemera (16 June and 16 December) carried out by Museum staff to document the design environment of the metropolitan area. Magazines are also trawled in this way, selection being based on the notoriety of the titles in question. The sampling approach allows titles to be represented in the collection – and thus available for display purposes in Museum galleries – without the drain of resources that a full subscription would entail.

### On-line resources

An increasing amount of material is available on-line for subscription. Facilities currently subscribed to are listed on the NAL's website. These include some major reference works, for example the *Grove Dictionary of Art* and the *Oxford English Dictionary*, and also facilities such as *Art Sales Index* and *Design and Applied Arts Index*. The trend in publishing is for journals to offer on-line as well as hard-copy versions, for the time being for a very low cost. In these cases, an on-line version is taken with the hard copy version. Every effort, particularly in consortia with other libraries, is made to access digitized material relevant to the collecting and study areas supported by the NAL.

### Trade Literature

The NAL builds upon 19<sup>th</sup> century acquisitions of trade literature (catalogues of retailers and manufacturers, brochures, promotional literature) by pro-active collecting of contemporary trade literature, to a research level.

### Documentary manuscripts

Manuscripts such as diaries, recipe books, inventories, individual letters, small collections of correspondence, are acquired when they are deemed to add significantly to what is known about the areas to which they relate. Larger collections of manuscript material are handled by the V&A's Archive of Art and Design (AAD). In each case, acquisition is made in close consultation with Museum curators, other interested public collections and with the Historical Manuscripts Commission.

### **Retention and De-accessioning**

Most works that enter the NAL join the V&A's permanent collections. First editions of works are not de-accessioned when a second edition is published. However, some common reference works – directories in particular – may be de-accessioned when a new edition appears, though a number are retained when the contents are considered to have an on-going value. When works appear in translation, the preferred version will be that in the original language, though English language versions will also be collected for core subjects. Damaged works are de-accessioned in cases where it is cheaper to replace the volume in question with a new copy. All works are de-accessioned according to the V&A's established procedures.

National Art Library

Word & Image Department

Victoria and Albert Museum