

The ROM Library & Archives, consisting of the Richard Wernham and Julia West Library & Archives and the Bishop White Committee Library of East Asia, will develop library and archival collections in a variety of media, ensure the care and preservation of library and archival holdings in accordance with professional standards, and manage library and archival holdings according to international best practices.

## **1. Library**

The Royal Ontario Museum Library will support the collections and research of the ROM through the acquisition of materials that closely relate to the subject interests of the museum's curators and which supplement exhibitions. The collections will broadly embrace World Cultures and Natural History, with an emphasis in the subject categories outlined below. Collection development will be driven primarily by curatorial needs, but will as much as possible limit duplication with the collections of University of Toronto Libraries and the Toronto Public Library.

### **1.1 Library Collections' Strengths**

The Library collections' strengths lie in several subject categories principally due to major donations received from the 1930s onward. The most significant of these is a collection of early natural history books, particularly ornithology titles, from the estate of James H. Fleming.

Other areas of strength include East Asian art and archaeology, Egyptology, European decorative arts, early Canadiana (Sigmund Samuel Collection), entomology, palaeontology, discovery and exploration, and costume and textiles, and extensive holdings relating to the study of Greek vases.

### **1.2 General Collection Guidelines**

The ROM Library collections principally reside in two locations – the Richard Wernham and Julia West Library (first floor) and the Bishop White Committee Library of East Asia (sixth floor). The collections in each location are distinguished as follows.

**Bishop White Committee Library of East Asia** – materials in multiple languages relating to Near Eastern and Asian arts and archaeology, specifically China, Japan and Korea, Islam/Middle East, and South Asia; Africa, including ancient Egypt / Nubia. The East Asian Librarian, in cooperation with library and curatorial staff is responsible for collection management in these areas.

**Richard Wernham and Julia West Library** – materials primarily in English relating to all other areas of research at the ROM: Canadian historical and decorative arts; the material culture and arts of Indigenous Peoples of North and Central America and contiguous regions; textiles and accessories; Western decorative arts, gold and silver, and arms and armor; Biodiversity, specifically botany, entomology, herpetology, ichthyology, invertebrate zoology, mammalogy, mycology, and ornithology;

Earth Sciences, specifically minerals, gemstones, and petrology; Paleobiology, specifically dinosaurs and other fossil vertebrates, Burgess Shale biota, and Ontario fossils. The Department Head in cooperation with library and curatorial staff is responsible for collection management in these areas.

As the interests and collections of the ROM frequently evolve and develop, the abovementioned collection guidelines are subject to reevaluation.

## **2. Archives**

The primary function of the ROM Archives is to acquire and preserve institutional records of enduring historical value and the private records of individuals and organizations associated with the ROM. According to available resources, the ROM Archives may acquire materials from sources external to the ROM for the purpose of supporting the mission of the museum to “increase understanding of the interdependent domains of cultural and natural diversity, their relationships, significance, preservation, and conservation” by providing access to information in all forms to ROM curators, scholars, and staff, as well as others with research needs (such as university students and researchers from other institutions). The ROM Archives endeavors to do this by building, organizing, managing, housing, and preserving collections; by providing reference services and consultation; by employing all appropriate technologies for describing and disseminating information and by contributing to and drawing from remote databases (Archeion).

Archives’ staff participates in local, national, and international networks and cooperative activities that promote the sharing of information, access to recorded knowledge, and the support and advancement of scholarly communication.

New acquisitions of primary research materials enhance the mission of the ROM Archives. Research materials must relate directly to the ROM’s overall collection mandate or relate directly to the history of the ROM as an institution.

### **2.2 Relation to Archival Collections outside the ROM**

Collection strengths at other Toronto, provincial, and Canadian institutions influence the collections programme at the ROM to some extent. The decision whether to acquire archival materials will be influenced by whether or not there is already an institution with a similar collection. Where possible donors will be encouraged to make their donation to the institution best suited to acquire the archival materials. The ROM will not compete with other institutions for the acquisition of archival materials.

## **3 Conditions of Acquisition**

All purchases and acceptance of donations must be weighed against curatorial needs and the availability of related materials in other Toronto-area libraries and archives.

Library and archival materials will be accessioned into the ROM collections only under the following conditions:

- The material must be consistent with and relevant to the ROM's mission
- The ROM Library & Archives must be able to provide proper care and storage for the material
- Archival materials and antiquarian books must be accompanied by a good record of provenance and must be authenticated. Exceptions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis
- The ROM is satisfied that any archival or antiquarian material to be acquired, whether by donation, exchange, or purchase, is not stolen or otherwise illegally acquired or collected. The acquisition of cultural property which has been in foreign countries will comply with the Cultural Property Export and Import Act, which incorporates the principles and provisions of the UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970) into Canadian law.

#### **4. De-Accessioning (Weeding)**

De-accessioning, or weeding, is the removal of materials from the Library collection that are no longer required or viable. Such practice is standard in managing a library's collection. Weeding is important in keeping the collection vibrant, relevant, and useable, and assists in preventing the collection from becoming overcrowded.

Weeding may be done on a permanent basis, or under-utilized materials may be relocated to off-site storage.

Archival materials are, as a general rule, not subject to permanent weeding, except at the discretion of the Archivist in consultation with the Department Head. Archival materials may be relocated to off-site storage as deemed appropriate by the Archivist.

The Library may, in consultation with curatorial staff, permanently remove or relocate monographs, journals, and any other materials (e.g., non-book print items, manuscript materials, electronic resources, A/V materials) based on the following criteria.

Materials should be reviewed, evaluated and weeded, using the following guidelines:

- Curatorial research needs as identified by ROM staff.
- Currency of information. The importance of this factor will vary with the discipline.

- The existence of multiple copies of the same title and edition. If duplicate copies include a donated copy, the donated copy should be retained, unless the book's condition warrants otherwise.
- The material is held in duplicate at one or more University of Toronto Libraries or the Toronto Public Library.
- Superseded works, especially ones with little historical importance, may be weeded.
- Physical condition of an item or set. Materials that are badly deteriorated or missing key parts may be withdrawn at the discretion of the Department Head or designated library staff person. As a general guideline, items to be discarded should not be rare or difficult to obtain from other libraries. Therefore, as alternatives to discarding, the Department Head or designated library staff person may opt to have material sent for binding or preservation treatment. Rare or unique materials will not be weeded. Damaged items may be replaced (rather than repaired) if they are available for purchase as new or used items in good condition.
- Materials available in other formats within the UTL consortia or online may be weeded, especially when they are low use and not rare.
- Format obsolescence. Materials in obsolete formats may be weeded if the content is available elsewhere or if the material is in poor condition.
- Items featuring ROM staff or collections, and/or works of local or special interest to our collections and users, should not be weeded unless they are held in multiple copies, are in poor physical condition, have been superseded by a more recent edition, or are available in another format.
- Donated items may be de-accessioned, subject to the above mentioned guidelines, at the discretion of the Department Head and in consultation with relevant curatorial staff, where appropriate.

The Department Head or designated library staff person is responsible for delivering weeded material to library technician staff for appropriate attention, including the modification of cataloguing records or transference of items.

Materials which are de-accessioned from the collection may be sold, donated, distributed, recycled, or discarded, at the Library & Archives' sole discretion.

## **5. Relevant Policy and Management Practices**

The ROM addresses many of the above issues in several of its Board policies including:

- Collections policy

- Copyright policy
- Emergency & disaster planning policy
- Information management & library policy
- Purchasing policy
- Risk Management policy

Please also see the following Library & Archives Management Practices:

- Access and Circulation
- Gifts-in-Kind

## **6. Contact Information**

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100 Queen's Park  
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Attn: Department Head  
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Last revised: June 2017