



GADSDEN MUSEUM OF ART

Collections Management Policy

Last Revised July, 2020

I. Statement of Purpose and Mission Statement

The Collections Management Policy of the Gadsden Museum of Art (hereafter referred to as “the Museum”) is written for the following purposes:

The Purpose of the policy is to make known to the City of Gadsden, the Museum Foundation Board, and the Public, the policies and procedures by which the Museum manages its collections.

The policy provides an official position as to the future development of the museum’s collection, which may be modified or changed as necessary to meet the need for the growth and alterations to the museum.

The Mission Statement is as follows:

The Gadsden Museum of Art promotes an appreciation for all types of visual arts by hosting a variety of changing art exhibits each year, as well as pieces from its permanent collection. Additionally, it fosters an awareness and appreciation of local history through exhibiting artifacts, photographs, and decorative arts of historical significance of the Gadsden and Etowah County area.

II. Purpose of the Collection Management Policy

This Collections Management Policy (the "Policy"), is intended to document the policies that guide the development, presentation and care of the Museum’s art collection consistent with the mission of the Museum and with professional museum standards

Through this Collections Management Policy, the Museum ensures that:

- A. Its collections are accounted for and documented in the collections management database;
- B. Its collections are protected, secure, cared for, and preserved;
- C. Acquisition, deaccessioning, and loans of works in the collections are conducted in a manner that conforms to the Museum's mission, complies with applicable law, and reflects the highest ethical standards;
- D. disposal of works from the collection through sale, exchange, or other means is solely for the advancement of the Museum's mission, and proceeds from the sale of such works are used only to purchase other works of art;
- E. Access to the collections in the galleries and study rooms and access to collection information is permitted and appropriately regulated; and
- F. Collection-related activities promote the public good rather than individual financial gain.

III. Acquisitions

A. General Principle

Items added to collection will be through free and clear donation, or purchased at the Directors request.

Fine Art Items

1. Artwork will be considered only if it brings value (artistic or monetary) to the existing collection. All works must be of a professional standard determined by artistic and cultural significance. Any damage to the item must be declared before ownership is turned over to the Museum.
2. The Museum will only acquire and accession objects which relate to the following subject areas:
 - a) *Paintings: accepted items must be of high artistic skill value.*
 - b) *Prints: accepted prints must be signed and numbered.*
 - c) *Photography: accepted photography must be high quality images with appropriate framing with high artistic value.*
 - d) *Sculpture: sculpture will be accepted based on condition, skill, and the Museum's ability to house the item. This includes having the space to store the item and having the space to store the item with the care that it requires.*
 - e) *Ceramics: ceramics will be accepted based on condition, skill, and the Museum's ability to house the item. This includes having the space to store the item and having the space to store the item with the care that it requires.*
 - f) *Other Artwork may be collected only if it enhances the collection.*

Historical Items

1. Objects should be acquired only after it has been determined that the museum can provide for their housing and preservation, and that the items are relevant to the existing collection and the purposes of the Museum.

The main focus of the historical collection is to preserve and educate patrons to the history of Gadsden and the surrounding area of Northeast Alabama.
2. Any other items considered to be accessioned must improve existing collections. Other Collections include:
 - a) *Native American Artifacts from Northeast Alabama*
 - b) *Artifacts relating to early settlements of America focusing on the South*
 - c) *Military History: 1700's and current as long as it has a connection to Northeast Alabama or an upcoming exhibit*
 - d) *Turn of the 19th century medical supplies*

- e) *Items related to local industry and economic development of Etowah County*
- f) *Early firefighting equipment similar to what was used in early Etowah County*
- g) *Farm equipment, housewares, furniture as used in early settlements in Etowah County*
- h) *Early Camera and Camera equipment*
- i) *Clothing worn by early settlers and clothing that best fits the life in Etowah County throughout generations.*

B. Procedures for Accepting Gifts

For all gifts (including promised gifts and partial interest gifts) and bequests, the curator recommending acceptance writes a detailed report, including a description of the work, its condition, publication history, importance to the Museum's collection, justification for acceptance, provenance and intentions for display (and/or storage) and publication.

No incoming item in possession of the museum will be assigned value by any volunteer, board member, employee, city official, or anyone acting on behalf of the museum. The Museum will not assign value or tax deductions as incentive to grow the collection.

C. Ownership

1. All items housed in the Museum collection are property of the City of Gadsden.
2. Gifts to the museum must be made without restriction.

D. Security

1. Collections storage has one door with only museum staff allowed access.

II. Staff Policies Related to Acquisitions

A. Appraisals

1. It has been the Museum's longstanding policy not to provide appraisals to donors. Under current IRS guidelines, the Museum cannot act as a qualified appraiser because of the inherent conflict with its role as a donee. If a donor asks for assistance in locating an appropriate appraiser, the curator may suggest several qualified appraisers. The Museum should not make arrangements for the appraisal and cannot pay for the appraisal. Upon request, the Museum should provide the appraiser with access to the work of art, images of the work or any appropriate relevant factual information in Museum files

2. No incoming item in possession of the museum will be assigned value by any volunteer, board member, employee, city official, or anyone acting on behalf of the museum. The Museum will not assign value or tax deductions as incentive to grow the collection.

B. Protected Artifacts

The Gadsden Museum of Art will follow all State and Federal guidelines outlined by the American Association of Museums concerning Native American artifacts, Nazi Era Appropriation, and human remains.

III. Deaccessioning

A. The purpose of deaccessioning is to improve the overall quality of the museum's accessioned collections through the deliberate, cautious, and selective removal of appropriate objects.

B. Any request for deaccession must be accompanied by information explaining the purpose and justifying the appropriateness of the action. Appropriate reasons for deaccession include at least one of the following:

1. The object has deteriorated beyond usefulness and relevance to the collection;
2. The object lacks relevance to the collecting strengths of the Museum or lies outside its scope of collections;
3. The object poses a hazard or risk to other objects in the collection;
4. The object is duplicated so as to be considered surplus and is desired for alternate use;
5. The object would be better served through a transfer of ownership to another institution.

IV. Incoming Loans

A. Incoming Loans will be at the Director's discretion with a completed loan agreement to be completed at the time the Museum takes possession.

B. Loaned items will be handled only by museum staff.

C. No open-ended loans will be allowed.

D. All incoming temporary shows must be picked up within 30 days of the end of exhibition. Items not collected within 30 days will become museum property.

V. Outgoing Loans

A. Outgoing Loans will be at the Director's discretion with completed loan agreement.

B. All loans should be for a specific period of time (normally not to exceed one year) and may be recalled upon thirty days' written notice to the borrower (or immediately if the Museum's review of the borrower discloses unsatisfactory conditions or continuation of the loan is placing an undue administrative burden on the Museum).