

Theatre Collection

Name of museum: University of Bristol Theatre Collection

Name of governing body: University of Bristol

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body: 23/6/2016

Policy review procedure: The collections development policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years.

Date at which this policy is due for review: 23/6/2021 (currently under review)

Arts Council England will be notified of any changes to the Collections Development Policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of the collections.

University of Bristol Theatre Collection

Collections Development Policy (2016-2021)

1. Relationship to other relevant policies/plans of the organisation:

1.1. The museum's statement of purpose:

Mission Statement:

Our mission is to curate a world-class collection relating to the history of British theatre. We will enable the Collection to be used for education, research, innovation, enjoyment and inspiration by all those who wish to do so, locally, nationally and internationally. Working with academic and student users, the creative & cultural sector and the public, we will facilitate the generation of new scholarly, creative and social outcomes.

Key Aims

1. To curate a world class collection relating to the history of British theatre that provides a unique insight into theatre, the process of creating theatre and theatre's broader cultural contexts.
2. To collect, care for, conserve and catalogue the holdings, raise awareness of them and make them available to a wide range of users both within and beyond the University.
3. To use the Collection as a resource for supporting academic activity: enabling and inspiring new research within and beyond the University of Bristol, enriching the student experience through collection-based teaching and learning, and facilitating impact and public engagement activities.
4. To enable and encourage the public to engage with the Collection through a variety of methods which offer routes to deepening knowledge. This may be on-site (exhibitions, reading and viewing rooms, volunteering and other activities), off-site (co-curated exhibitions, loans and events) and online (website, social media and other digital platforms).
5. To work with the creative & cultural industries and act as a catalyst to develop, nurture and support partnerships, projects and outcomes based upon the Collection.

6. To enable the Collection to be used as a source for investigation and inspiration, which may have scholarly, creative, cultural and/or social outcomes (as encapsulated in the IDEASpace model, see Appendix 1).
- 1.2 The governing body will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.
- 1.3 By definition, the museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for the benefit of the public in relation to its stated objectives. The governing body therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons must be established before consideration is given to any acquisition to the collection, or the disposal of any items in the museum's collection.
- 1.4 Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.
- 1.5 The museum recognises its responsibility, when acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Standard. This includes using SPECTRUM primary procedures for collections management. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.
- 1.6 The museum will undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.
- 1.7 The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons.

2 History of the collections

The University of Bristol Theatre Collection (TC) was founded in 1951 with funds provided by the Rockefeller Foundation as a theatre archive with a supporting library. It was founded by Professor Glynne Wickham who, in 1947, had also founded the University of Bristol Drama Department, which was the first to be established in the UK. At the outset the TC raison d'être was to 'serve students, scholars and practising theatre artists alike'. It has always retained the core remit of being a 'working' collection that informs and inspires academics and practitioners. Over the last two

decades, this has expanded to include a more public facing role. The TC has always been supported and valued by the University. In 1966 the University established the first full time Keeper post, and the TC is now staffed by a team of 4.2 FTE posts.

There have been a number of highly significant acquisitions over the past six decades. The earliest was the Bristol Old Vic Archive, which was placed on loan in 1960, with several subsequent major deposits of material. The Richard Southern Collection was purchased for the TC by the University in 1966. It comprises models of theatres and a large visual collection which primarily concerns theatre architecture, scenery and costume. This was followed by the Beerbohm Tree Collection (1972) comprising promptbooks, costume designs, scene designs and documentation connected with his company. This collection was purchased by the University with additional funds from the V&A Purchase Grant Fund. At this time an Assistant Keeper was appointed.

In 1980 the Eric Jones-Evans Collection, which consists of material connected with Eric Jones-Evans as well as Henry Irving, Martin Harvey and Bransby Williams, began to be deposited by Eric Jones Evans. In 1982, the Beerbohm Tree Correspondence was bought for the TC with assistance from the V&A Purchase Grant Fund, the National Heritage Memorial Fund, and the Friends of the Theatre Collection. In the same year, the London Old Vic Archives were deposited by the Trustees of the Royal Victoria Hall Foundation (with another major deposit in 1987 and several smaller ones since). In 1983 the Alan Tagg Collection was donated by Alan Tagg, a leading theatre designer. In 1988 the Eric Jones-Evans bequest transferred the remainder of his collection to the TC along with a major financial endowment to 'enable us to acquire items for the Collection, or material to house and care for those items'. In 1990 the Women's Theatre Collection was founded (as a collection within the TC), with a focus on actively collecting archival material relating to women's, particularly feminist, theatre. This collection continued to grow through the 1990s as there was a strong interest in the subject area within the Drama Department. Another collection with strong academic ties to the department was the Welfare State International Archive which was placed on loan in 1999 and donated to the TC in 2006.

In 2001 the TC gained registered (now accredited) museum status. In 2004, the donation of the Julia Trevelyan Oman Archive by Sir Roy Strong cemented our position as a collection with a national profile. The importance of documenting the process of creating theatre (i.e. the 'how' and the 'why' as well as the 'what') alongside the product itself (performance documentation) began to take a more prominent role in our collections during this decade, and continues to date. The next major acquisition was the transfer of the Live Art Archives from Nottingham Trent University in 2005 and, again, it supported evolving academic priorities within the

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UoB Drama Department. This major acquisition signalled new developments for the TC and enabled a physical expansion of premises and a new staff member (Keeper: Live Art Archives) and the direct involvement in a major research project. The Live Art Archives acquisition expanded, rather than refocused our remit and opened up many new opportunities for academic research projects, funding and partnerships. This was followed by the donation of the Franko B Archive in 2008, which strengthened our international position in relation to Live Art. By now the staff team comprised Director: Theatre Collection, Keeper: Theatre Archives and Keeper: Live Art Archives. We obtained accredited museum status in 2009.

The largest acquisition in the history of the TC took place in 2011, with the transfer of the Mander & Mitchenson Collection (M&M) by its Trustees. It currently represents about a third of our holdings and dovetails perfectly with our existing theatre collections. M&M has been transformative in terms of the quality and richness of our holdings and also the quality of visitor experiences we can offer through improved exhibitions and in-depth research and other learning experiences. In order to facilitate this transfer, the University funded the construction of a large, specialised off-site store at Langford to house the expanded collections. In summary, M&M facilitated a step change in the level of our operation and our profile, and enhanced our ability to engage with a wider range of audiences than ever before.

As a result, we began to receive an increased number of offers of donations and an increased quality of the collections offered. In order to focus our resources on the curatorial care of museum and library collections we began to implement a more rigorous assessment of potential accessions (for details see 9) and a more rigorous approach to printed material including theatre programmes, books and journals. We stopped routinely taking in ad hoc theatre programmes (which accounted for a high proportion of accessions), whilst continuing to systematically collect for selected theatres.

M&M transferred with a large library of its own, which we are amalgamating with the TC library. We maintain and develop the library as a key supporting resource for users of the Collection. Due to the increase in volumes from the M&M library we are no longer accepting unsolicited ad hoc donations to the library. We continue to acquire publications (books and journals) that are unique, rare or highly significant in terms of the collections we hold. In response to the increased use of the Collection, primarily due to M&M, the University established a new Archive Assistant post in 2012.

In 2013 an Academic Review of the TC recognised our wider potential as a vital research and teaching facility across the Arts Faculty. As a result we were organisationally moved from being a Department to Faculty responsibility. This tied

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in with a rebranding exercise which described the TC as 'More than just theatre' to encourage people to access and engage with our holdings from a wide variety of perspectives and broader cultural contexts. In 2015 we purchased the personal archive of Oliver Messel (£100,000), with support from the National Heritage Memorial Fund, other Trusts & Foundations and individual donors. This archive encapsulates the process of creativity and the influence of theatre on wider society, and epitomises our mission to develop holdings in ways that inform and inspire others. In 2015/16, as part of the review of procedures in the light of the new Collections Development Policy, we developed a more formalised Accession Scoring Criteria to help prioritise which collections we should accept or purchase.

In recent years we have also seen an increase in financial gifts that accompany the donation of collections. These donations are made in order to enable or expedite the cataloguing and conservation of the collections and/or encourage wider interaction with them. For example, in 2013/14 Theatre Roundabout donated their archive along with funds to catalogue, conserve and exhibit it. In 2016, following the donation of Kevin Elyot's Archive his family made a donation to cover cataloguing and conservation costs. They also gave an additional £100,000 endowment to establish the Kevin Elyot Award, which will fund an annual writer-in-residence so they can produce new scholarly or creative work inspired the archive and wider collections.

3 An overview of current collections

The current Collection falls into two main categories: Theatre and Live Art. The Collection is supported by a substantial reference library.

3.1 Theatre Holdings

The Theatre holdings comprise 3,700 linear meters and they contain material in a wide variety of formats. It is the second largest collection relating to the history of British theatre in the UK. There are 140 named archives and collections along with over 200 smaller accessions.

The key collections are:

Owned by the TC: Named Collections:

- **Andrew Leigh Archive** – the archive of Andrew Leigh and Prospect Theatre Company who produced plays at the Old Vic Theatre from 1977 after the departure of the National Theatre Company to the Southbank. It contains both production and business papers for the company.
- **Drama Department (University of Bristol) Archive**. Administrative papers of the department, the first of its kind in the UK; including records relating to accommodation, productions, conferences, lectures, visiting companies,

fellowships, research and the papers of Heads of Department and Theatre Managers.

- **Eric Jones-Evans Collection** – The collection of Eric Jones-Evans, actor and playwright, including his archive relating to his theatrical work. It also includes collections compiled by Jones-Evans relating to Henry Irving, Bransby Williams and John Martin Harvey, including costumes and props as well as paper-based materials.
- **Farjeon Family Archive**. Including Herbert Farjeon, Joseph Jefferson, Joseph Jefferson Farjeon and Joan Jefferson Farjeon.
- **Herbert Beerbohm Tree Archive** - The Beerbohm Tree Collection held by the Theatre Collection comprises two major archives of international importance, the Herbert Beerbohm Tree Archive and the Tree Family Archive. The Herbert Beerbohm Tree Archive comprises the business and production records for Hebert Beerbohm Tree's productions at the Theatre Royal Haymarket and Her Majesty's theatres plus tours within the UK and abroad. The Tree Family Archive comprises the personal records of Maud Tree, her husband, Herbert Beerbohm Tree and their children, Viola, Iris and Felicity Tree.
- **Irving Family Archive** - Archives relating to the Irving family, including Sir Henry, H.B., Laurence and John.
- **John Vickers (Photographer) Archive** - This comprehensive archive documents Vickers' career throughout the 1940s and 1950s and compliments the London Old Vic collection which is also held here. It includes glass plate negatives, prints, framed items, correspondence and ephemera.
- **Julia Trevelyan Oman Archive** - Her personal archive covers her entire career and includes her original designs with research files, technical drawings and plans, research photographs, production photographs, correspondence and fabric swatches.
- **Kevin Elyot Archive** – archive of the actor and playwright best known for his seminal work *My Night with Reg*. Includes manuscript drafts, final scripts, research, correspondence, printed material and audio-visual material.
- **Mander & Mitchenson Collection** - The Mander & Mitchenson Theatre Collection (M&M) is the result of the lifetime's work of Raymond Mander and Joe Mitchenson collecting the archives and ephemera of Britain's theatrical history. It contains archives, costumes, ceramics, art works, audio recordings and more.
- **Oliver Messel Archive** – Oliver Messel was one of the most celebrated theatre designers Britain ever produced. The archive provides rare insight into the theatricality inherent in Society life and, in addition to his stage and screen work, it evidences how Messel influenced art, architecture, décor and national celebrations. It contains art work, correspondence, photographs, press cuttings, architectural drawings and more.

- **Rare Book Collection.** Over 1500 unique, rare, early, fragile or heavily annotated items including the Howard Staunton Facsimile of the Complete Works of Shakespeare (1886) and *Monumenta Scenica*. There is a large collection of plays, mainly 19th and 20th century, including Lacy's Acting Plays and Dicks' Standard Plays, plus some 17th and 18th century editions and the standard 18th and 19th century sets and series such as Bell's, Cumberland's, Jone's and Dolby's British Theatre. There are also several volume sets of the works of Shakespeare, many illustrated. The Collection also includes a small number of 19th century theatrical journals, mostly single issues or small runs, including *Grumbler* 1839, *The Town* 1838, *Oxberry's Weekly Budget* 1843-44, *The Dramatic Censor* 1800 and Tallis's *Dramatic Magazine* and *General Theatrical and Musical Review* 1850-51. The Era 1850-1919 with a few gaps.
- **Richard Southern Collection.** This is an important visual resource for the history of theatre. It is particularly strong in the areas of theatre architecture and backstage information, including plans, photographs, cuttings, as well as scenery and costume.
- **Shakespeare at the Tobacco Factory.** The archives of the theatre company based at the Tobacco Factory in Bristol. The archive contains production records and information regarding educational work and a number of props.
- **Theatre Roundabout.** The archive of the theatre company which toured two-person adaptations of major literary works around the country and abroad from 1961-2008. Includes production and business papers, costumes and props.
- **Welfare State International Theatre Company Archive** (and John Fox/Sue Gill Archive see below). The archive of the collective of radical artists and thinkers who explored ideas of celebratory art and spectacle between 1968 and 2006. Includes records of productions, education work, grant applications etc.
- **Women's Playhouse Trust.** The archive of the company founded in 1984 by Jules Wright and others to nurture female talent in theatre. Containing business papers, publications and production information.
- **Women's Theatre Collection.** This was established in 1990 to provide a centre for playscripts by women of performed but not necessarily published plays. There are additionally a number of small archives which offer an insight into the involvement of individuals and small companies including: Margaret Macnamara (playwright); Marie Scharning (actress); Ella Burra (playwright); Sylvia Rayman (playwright); The Conference of Women Theatre Directors and Administrators; Moving Target Theatre Company.

Owned by the TC: Other Collections:

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- **Amateur theatre.** Mainly printed records relating to amateur theatre productions in the Bristol area, including programmes.
- **Other named collections (over 100 smaller archival collections)** from theatre professionals, historians and collectors, companies and organisations, including: **Kathleen Barker** (theatre historian), **Stephanie Cole** (actor), **John Moody** (artistic director), **Arnold Ridley** (actor and playwright), **George Rowell** (academic and playwright), **Ernest Thesiger** (actor), **Glynne Wickham** (academic and historian, founded the University of Bristol Drama Department).
- **Designers' archives** including **Graham Barlow, Frederick Croke, Herbert Norris, Yolanda Sonnabend, Alan Tagg** and **David Walker**. Including sketches, finished designs, research and notes.
- **Smaller collections and individual items.** Our Collection includes many individual objects and small groups of collections. The objects are wide ranging and varied and include costumes, textiles, puppets, props, set models, personal memorabilia and ephemera etc. We also hold art works including paintings, sketches, designs, prints, photography, sculpture and ceramics. Our Collections of AV material (sound recording and film of performances) and digitised content are also substantive. These objects often provide the most significant or immediate point of contact for interpretation or other form of engagement with our users.
- **TC artificial collections.** Including Costumes, Set Designs and Models, Costume Designs, Programmes, Playbills and Posters.

And, on long-term renewable loan:

- **Bristol Old Vic Archive** - The Bristol Old Vic Archive includes the administrative and production records of the theatre company from its inception in 1946, and for the Little Theatre between 1963-1980.
- **John Fox/Sue Gill Archive** – founder members of Welfare State International (see above) and now creators of Dead Good Guides. The archive contains records of performances, publications, correspondence etc.
- **Joyce Grenfell Archive** - The Joyce Grenfell Archive is a personal collection which contains correspondence, drawings, monologues, scripts for radio and television, as well as books and photographs that reflect her talents, interests and contacts in the entertainment industry.
- **London Old Vic Archive (Royal Victoria Hall Foundation)** - The Old Vic archive is a unique historical record of a London theatre and company, from its foundation in 1818 as the Royal Coburg Theatre, until the end of the Mirvish years in 1997.
- **Royal Theatrical Fund Archive** – The archive of the charity established in 1839 and still going today to provide financial assistance to theatre

professionals. The archive contains the business records, correspondence, and records of dinners and other events.

3.2 The Live Art Archives

The Live Art Archives comprise 200 linear meters and are the most comprehensive collection of Live Art material in the UK, possibly the world. They were established in 1994, and transferred to the Theatre Collection in 2005. The Archives contain a range of material in a variety of formats, particularly AV and digital, and relate to individual artists, companies, festivals and other organisations. The holdings include:

- **Alastair Snow Archive** Archive of the artist and photographer, which contains a wealth of material from his performances, including many photographs and props such as The Guerilla Squad masks and pieces of 'edible art' from the Edible Art Association event in 1981.
- **Arts Council England Live Art and Performance Archive (ACELAP Archive)**. Videos and documentation which represent the development of innovative contemporary arts practice during the 1980s and 1990s in the UK.
- **Bodies in Flight Archive**. Archive to date of the contemporary performance company formed in 1990 and closely related to the Bristol Drama Department.
- **David Hughes Live Art Archive (incorporating Hybrid, LiveArt magazine and Live Art Listings)** The archive includes video tapes, mini DV tapes, DVDs, catalogues, printed material, brochures, playbills, posters, ephemera such as day bills and fliers, plus a few iconic objects which date from 1978 to the present.
- **Digital Performance Archive (DPA)**. A video and CD-ROM archive, which also contains some printed material such as press cuttings and supporting information.
- **Franko B Archive**. Archive of the internationally renowned performance artist, which includes material in a wide variety of formats related to his performances, screenings, exhibitions, collaborations, mentoring, books and visual art.
- **greenroom Archive** Archive of the prestigious Manchester organisation which developed and presented local, national and international performance and closed in 2011.
- **Hull Time Based Arts Archive**. Archive of Northern England's combined arts development agency and one of Europe's leading commissioners of performance and new technology art which closed in the mid-2000s.
- **National Review of Live Art Archive (NRLA Archive)**. Primarily a video archive that holds footage of performances from the prestigious NRLA festival. The footage covers the period from 1986 to when the festival finished in 2010.
- **queerupnorth Video Archive** The video archive consists of videos submitted by artists, along with other materials promoting their work, videos recorded by,

or on behalf of, queerupnorth, mostly within venues in Manchester during the festival. The rest of the archive is held in Manchester.

- **Record of Live Art Practice (RLAP).** A collection of material relating to over 200,000 records of Live Art/Performance Art primarily in England and the UK, from 1994 to the present. Mostly paper-based, although it does contain some videos and DVDs, audio-tapes and slides.
- In addition to the collections listed above, the Live Art Archives also contain a number of smaller collections of live-art-related material in various formats. This is supported by a wide range of AV and other resources in the Theatre Collection library.

3.3 Digital Media

In recent years, the TC has increased its digital holdings. It holds some born digital material, such as production photographs, mini DV recordings and a small number of oral history recordings. It holds 42.5TB of digital content which is stored on the UoB Research Data Storage Facility, under a 'pay once store forever' policy, and 0.35TB other digital content on local servers.

3.4 Other Collections

The Theatre Collection library, which is reference only, is an integral part of the Theatre Collection, helping our users place the Collection within its wider context. The library comprises c30,000 books and over 300 journal titles, the majority of which are on open access, but there is also a Rare Book Collection (which is also a named collection in the Theatre Collection holdings) of approximately 1,500 books and pamphlets (over 50 linear metres). These items are all early, rare, unique and/or heavily annotated. The TC library holdings on open access are predominately twentieth century books, while the majority of the books within the Rare Book Collection date between 1750 and 1900, and the earliest examples go back to the late 1600s. Many of the books on open access in the TC library, particularly those that were transferred as part of the Mander & Mitchenson Collection, are also heavily annotated and are therefore irreplaceable.

3.5 Strength and Significance

By the time of our museum registration in 2001, the TC had developed very strong and significant collections in of nineteenth and twentieth century British theatre, and had a particular emphasis on regional theatre especially that of the south west. In 2011, the acquisition of the M&M Collection brought with it collections relating to London as well as most regional theatres, plus actors, writers, directors, designers, and many performing and non-performing companies from the UK. This transfer, which in effect merged two major collections, provided the TC with a very strong grounding across most areas of

British theatre history. Other areas of particular strength and significance are the visual representation of theatre through set and costume designs, theatre photography and theatre architecture.

We are particularly strong on theatre within the Bristol area with the archives of Bristol Old Vic, Shakespeare at the Tobacco Factory, Kathleen Barker and smaller local collections. We also collect the archive of the Drama Department (1947- 2015) covering Theatre, Film and TV and the Theatre Department (2015-). We also collect material relating to the key people, activities and research projects associated with the Department.

More contemporary performance is also very well represented in the Collection. We are the lead museum collection in the UK, and one of the leading collections in the world, for Live Art (sometime referred to as Performance Art). The archives of NRLA and Franko B are particularly important. Due to the challenging nature of their format and contents, the TC is seen as leading the field in the curatorial care of and access to these 'challenging' contemporary archives.

Another strength is that we have close relationships with the companies whose archives we hold, such as Bristol Old Vic and London Old Vic. This ongoing dialogue ensures we continue to collect the most complete archive possible that will provide the greatest insight to current and future users. For example, the business records when combined with the production records, provide a deeper insight into theatre practices. Likewise, we have taken this holistic approach when acquiring personal archives and collections and we have strong and active links with many individual collectors and professionals

3.6 Relevance to Statement of Purpose

The Collection exemplifies our Mission Statement and underpins our key aims because, taken as a whole, it presents a comprehensive, world-class collection relating to the history of British theatre (the definition of which also includes Live Art, see below). Moreover, our collecting policy includes the creative and practical process of making theatre and embraces the wider cultural context within which theatre sits. In doing this, we maximise the range of users and the ways they can engage with the collection through education, research, innovation, enjoyment and for inspiration.

The significance and quality of the collection in terms of its breadth and depth, supports and enables high quality academic activity including independent learning, as well as teaching and research. The Collection also supports and encourages the citizen scholar. The popularity of theatre and performance, our

close links with well-known practitioners and the iconic objects within the Collection enable us to engage the wider public through University impact activities, public engagement and partnership projects.

With our Collections we endeavour to curate a world class collection that accurately reflects the history of British theatre, which can be used now and by future generations. To do this, we need to bring together objects, artworks, archival and library collections and treat them all with integrity. In our approach to archive collections we respect the integrity of the archive by not cherry picking key items from larger archives and we also reflect the integrity of the collection during the appraisal process. By doing this multi-format / combined approach we can ensure our collections are more fully comprehensive and have multiple 'routes of entry' for users and researchers of all levels and disciplines. We can then use these collections to underpin the IDEASpace model of working and engagement with our three constituent user communities: Academic, Cultural & Creative Industries and the Public.

4. Themes and priorities for future collecting

4.1 Overview

The priorities for future collecting for the Theatre Collection are directly derived from our Mission Statement, namely to curate a world class collection relating to the history of British theatre that provides a unique insight into theatre, the process of creating theatre and theatre's broader cultural contexts.

We will continue to actively collect material that helps us achieve our mission and the key aims that underpin it. We remain committed to maintaining active relationships with companies and individuals whose material is held by the TC. We also remain responsive to developments in the focus of academic research and teaching.

A consideration of other CDPs and consultation with our stakeholders has helped frame this CDP and a decision has been made to continue to collect broadly across the area of professional British theatre history, rather than to narrow down into particular subject areas, periods or themes. This decision was made in the light of University needs and requirements of the TC, especially given our role as an Arts Faculty resource. It was also made in the light of the provision of other Performing Arts Collections in the UK.

Our overarching criteria is that the collections must reflect the history of British theatre. For the purposes of the TC, theatre is defined to embrace Live Art but generally exclude opera, ballet and dance. These disciplines fall outside of our remit and are covered by other museums and collecting institutions. This definition has its

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origins in the UoB Department, which historically has taught drama but not opera, ballet or dance. Exceptions to this rule may be made when an archive or collection is predominately rooted in theatre but also extends to these wider art forms. For archival deposits, because of our holistic approach we would not normally split the archive/collection to exclude non–theatre aspects.

Our vision is to curate a subject-based collection, but such that, because of its range, breadth, depth, and quality, it offers a collection that is ‘more than just theatre’ and gives an insight into broader cultural contexts. This allows the Collection to be used by scholars from many different disciplines and opens up avenues of enquiries from practitioners and the wider public.

We plan to continue to strengthen our collections in areas that will document and help others understand more about the process of creating theatre (i.e. *how* and the *why* as well as *who*, *what*, *when* and *where*). This includes the less well documented, behind the scenes aspects of theatre that need to sit alongside the public facing and on stage activity to create a full record.

4.2 Our collecting remit

Our remit is to collect material relating to a cross section of theatre based activities in Britain which is predominately:

- Professional British theatre (with exceptions/additions described).
- Live Art (also referred to Performance Art) relating to artists, companies or festivals based in Britain.

Within this remit we particularly seek accessions that relate to the practice and process of theatre, and give an insight into creativity and its application.

We will continue to build the collections we already hold where the companies and individuals are still active e.g. Bristol Old Vic, Franko B, Stephanie Cole. We also seek to fill gaps in our holdings with regard to other companies and individuals whose collections we hold that may not still be active e.g. London Old Vic (Royal Victoria Hall Foundation, 1818-1963), Beerbohm Tree etc.

We will also prioritise collecting material that directly or indirectly relates to existing collections that will provide greater insight into these collections. This material might have significant research potential and / or act as a trigger for enhancing public engagement in line with our key aims.

4.3 New Collections

We will continue to collect new stand-alone items, small and, occasionally, large collections. In assessing these potential accessions, any relationship these items

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may have to existing holdings is considered very important. Consideration is also given to intrinsic value (including quality and rareness or as an example of 'best of its kind') and the additional evidential, informational, research, display and public engagement value it offers. An item's provenance is also a key factor, especially for objects and personal collections.

We will collect items relating to professional British theatre and Live Art such as, but are not limited to:

- Architectural plans and records
- Art work including prints and engravings
- AV material
- Costumes *
- Designs: set, costume, lighting, technical drawings etc.
- Oral history
- Personal material (objects etc.)
- Ephemera
- Playbills and posters.
- Press cuttings – not routinely collected unless it forms part of a larger collection or there is an intrinsic value of scrapbook/press cutting book
- Programmes **
- Props *
- Puppets – only if directly relate to British theatre
- Sculpture, busts etc. *
- Season brochures and flyers **
- Set models
- Textiles (samples, swatches, embroidery etc.) *
- Theatre photography
- Theatrical figurines and ceramics
- Theatrical machinery – would only be collected in very exceptional circumstances
- Tickets ** and tokens

NB

*For some categories of item (marked *) priority is only given to those which have exceptional potential for exhibition or display, have iconic status, or are key items in terms of the history of British theatre and / or are intimately related to other, existing collections.

** Some categories of printed material (marked **) will only be acquired in very exceptional circumstances.

Library: we continue to collect books and journals to fill particular gaps in the holdings e.g. journal runs, and will focus on rare books which will be added to the Collection.

Other resources: we collect kit such as record players but these are not accessioned into the Collection.

4.4 Non-professional theatre and underrepresented material

We will continue our existing remit of collecting selected amateur theatre material for Bristol and its environs as a representative sample of UK amateur theatre.

As a collection that is one of the key general theatre collections in the UK (the other one being the V&A) we are mindful of our role as a potential repository for material that is currently underrepresented in UK collections and is at risk of being lost from our cultural heritage record. This material may be required for use now, in order to understand the subject or we may consider it will be of great importance in the future. We will therefore actively seek to collect in the following new areas of non-professional theatre:

- Country House and Private Theatricals
- Prisoner of War and related theatre

4.5 International remit

Our definition of British theatre includes theatre performed abroad by British theatre companies or people. RLAP will continue to embrace international work but we will no longer routinely collect international material for the WTC Playscript collection. An exception to this remit may be made in exceptional circumstances to collect international material but only if it significantly informs the existing holdings.

4.6 Changes to previous policy re acquisition, rationalisation and disposal (also see 5.)

In order to focus activities we have identified as priorities, the acquisition of theatre programmes has been reconsidered. In 2012 we decided to stop collecting theatre programmes for the foreseeable future. This informal review is now formalised in the CDP. The decision was made for three reasons: 1) in light of the acquisition of M&M and the many thousands of programmes within it; 2) the high number of programmes that were being donated every year, of which the majority were subsequently found to be duplicates, and 3) the almost complete runs of Bristol/Bath based theatres and certain London theatres (e.g. National Theatre) we already had. When all programmes have been amalgamated into the TC Programme Collection a reconsideration will be given to this decision.

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We are also refining our policy on duplicate printed material such as programmes, flyers and posters. In future, we will only keep one copy of this printed material (rather than the three that were formerly kept). We will apply this policy for all new accessions and retrospectively begin to rationalise current collections. Items will not be disposed of without the prior permission of the depositor/owner and financial motivation will not be a key factor.

This duplicate policy also applies to books and journals in the library and these too will be rationalised. Permission to do this was given by the Trustees of M&M and we will gain other permissions as required.

4.7 Areas of exclusion

Sets

- Full size set cloths, and full size sets are not collected.

Other related subjects

- We do not normally collect opera, dance, ballet, circus or music concerts (but we do collect Variety, Music Hall, and Musicals)
- We may collect opera, dance, ballet, and circus or music concerts when it forms a smaller, or integral, section of a much larger theatre based collection.

Radio, Film, TV, Broadcast

- We will only collect radio, film, TV and broadcast material when it relates to the history of the UoB Drama Department.
- We may collect radio, film, TV and broadcast material when it forms a smaller, or integral, section of a much larger theatre based collection.

4.8 Academic Priorities and the research agenda

The TC recognises that it needs to remain responsive to the changing research agenda of the University, and that this may in very exceptional circumstances require an amendment or exception to be made to the CDP. In the unlikely event of this affecting any possible future acquisitions, the consideration of the strategic research potential for the University and more generally across the UK will be a primary consideration and full discussion will be made with the appropriate bodies (TCMC, Arts Faculty and ACE).

4.9 Accession Priorities Scoring Criteria

In order to be responsible and sustainable we recognise we have to take a more rigorous approach to developing our Collection, and be selective in the number of

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accessions we take in. Therefore, we have developed a more formalised priorities criteria to guide decision making as regards potential accessions of items and collections. This is used when assessing all potential accessions. (See Appendix 2).

5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

- 5.1 The museum recognises that the principles on which priorities for rationalisation and disposal are determined will be through a formal review process that identifies which collections are included and excluded from the review. The outcome of review and any subsequent rationalisation will not reduce the quality or significance of the collection and will result in a more useable, well managed collection.
- 5.2 The procedures used will meet professional standards. The process will be documented, open and transparent. There will be clear communication with key stakeholders about the outcomes and the process.
- 5.3 The items under consideration for disposal during the period of the CDP relate to:
- Theatre programmes (i.e. printed, publically distributed material) that are duplicates and when we have permission from the owner/depositor to dispose of them (see above).
 - Theatre posters and playbills (i.e. printed, publically distributed material) that are duplicates and when we have permission from the owner/depositor to dispose of them (see above).
 - Material in larger accessions that came in in the past as bulk accessions and included material that should not have been accessioned e.g. theatre bar receipts. In cases where the material is on loan to us, these items will be disposed of according to the owners' wishes.
- 5.4 Any other disposals will only be undertaken for legal, safety or care and conservation reasons (e.g. spoliation, radiation, infestation, repatriation).

6 Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items

- 6.1 The museum recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museum Association Code of Ethics when considering acquisition and disposal.

7 Collecting policies of other museums

7.1 The museum will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other 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.

7.2 Specific reference is made to the following museum(s)/organisation(s):

V&A Theatre and Performance Collections, National Theatre, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, and other members of the Association of Performing Arts Collections (APAC) including Kingston University Special Collections, Reading University Special Collections and the Rambert Archive and also Live Art Development Agency (LADA).

More locally, University of Bristol Special Collections, Bristol Culture (including City Museum, MShed and Bristol Record Office), and, for any film based material, the Bill Douglas Cinema Museum.

8 Archival holdings

By its very nature, and that of the ephemeral art form they pertain to, the Theatre Collection's holdings include a large proportion of archival material. As this material forms a constituent part of our collections and is inextricably related to the rest of the holdings this archival material is treated as an integral part of our Collection. As well as the museum accreditation standards for this material, we are guided by archival standards and the requirements of the Archive Service Accreditation Scheme as appropriate. Our function as a museum embraces this archival material as part of our collection and within our overall mission, aims objectives and operational activities.

9 Acquisition

9.1 The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:

There is a tiered system for agreeing acquisitions, depending on the size, scale and potential cost (purchase price, conservation and cataloguing needs, display costs) of the acquisition. All potential acquisitions are

assessed according to the acquisitions scoring criteria (see section 9.1 and Appendix 2).

The hierarchy for decision making is:

An acquisitions committee assesses and reviews the potential acquisition and scores it according to the criteria. If necessary further information is sought, it is discussed with other collections /museums and a site visit is carried out if needed. The acquisitions committee comprises a minimum core team of three drawn from the TC staff: Director: Theatre Collection, Keepers (Theatre and/or Live Art) and, occasionally, the Archive Assistant with additional expertise brought in as appropriate e.g. Academic Champion, subject specialists, external consultation etc. The majority of potential accessions are dealt with at this level e.g. individual items, small or medium size collections and/or accessions where funding and sustainability models are clearly defined.

For more complex decisions e.g. much larger collections or ones that have a level of strategic or operational impact the decisions are referred to the TC Management Committee for approval.

For a major accession or one that has significant operational or strategic impact the decisions are made at Arts Faculty level by the Arts Faculty Board or in extreme circumstances by the Dean in consultation with University senior managers.

The UoB procurement rules and regulations (including sign off level) are followed for all purchased acquisitions.

- 9.2 The museum will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in or exported from its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the United Kingdom).
- 9.3 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 governing body 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.

10 Human remains

10.1 As the museum holds or intends to acquire human remains under 100 years old, it will obtain the necessary licence under the Human Tissue Act 2004 and any subordinate legislation from time to time in force.

Please note the museum currently holds biological material (blood related art works) relating to a live person (which in the fullness of time will become classified as human remains). It may in future acquire more body based material as part of the Live Art Archives. The museum abides by the Human Tissue Act 2004.

11 Biological and geological material

11.1 So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the museum will not acquire by any direct or indirect means any specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

12 Archaeological material

12.1 The museum will not acquire any archaeological material.

13 Exceptions

13.1 Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because the museum is:

- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin
- acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin

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. The museum will document when these exceptions occur.

14 Spoliation

- 14.1 The museum will use the statement of principles ‘Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period’, issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

15 The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

- 15.1 The museum’s governing body, acting on the advice of the museum’s professional staff, if any, 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), objects or specimens 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 16.1-5 will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.
- 15.2 The disposal of human remains from museums in England, Northern Ireland and Wales will follow the procedures in the ‘Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Museums’.

16 Disposal procedures

- 16.1 All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the SPECTRUM Primary Procedures on disposal.
- 16.2 The governing body will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will also be taken into account.
- 16.3 When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, 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.

- 16.4 When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale, exchange or, as a last resort, - destruction.
- 16.5 The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including 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. Expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought.
- 16.6 A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator or manager of the collection acting alone.
- 16.7 Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- 16.8 If the material is not acquired by any Accredited Museum to which it was offered as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material normally through a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).
- 16.9 The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or 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.

- 16.10 Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied solely and directly 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 the Arts Council England
- 16.11 The proceeds of a sale will be allocated so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard. Money must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection.
- 16.12 Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements 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 SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccession and disposal.

Disposal by exchange

- 16.13 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 governing body will therefore ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process.
- 16.13.1 In cases where the governing body wishes for sound curatorial reasons to exchange material directly with Accredited or non-Accredited museums, with other organisations or with individuals, the procedures in paragraphs 16.1-5 will apply.
- 16.13.2 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.

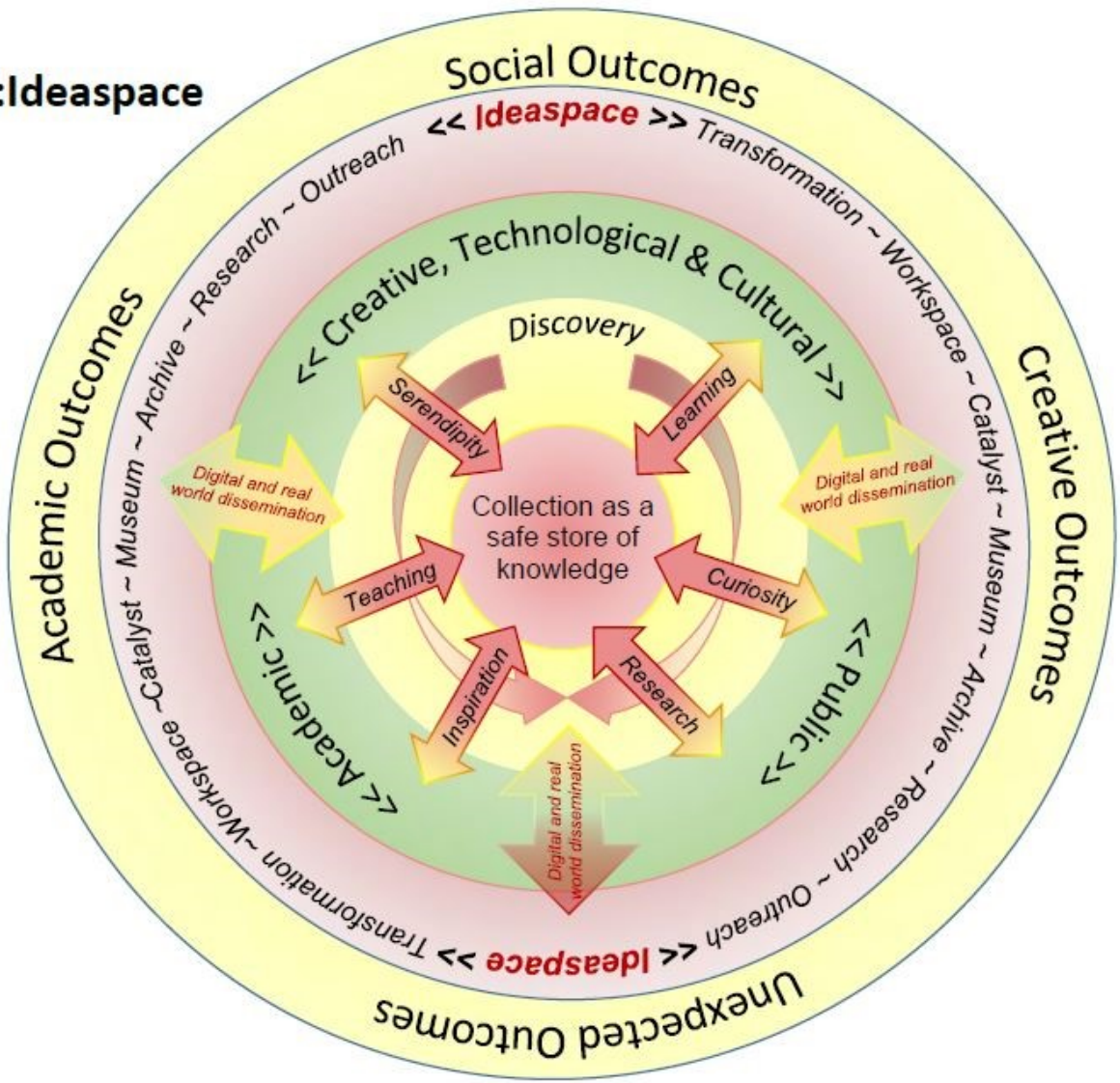
- 16.13.3 If the exchange is proposed with a non-Accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, the museum will place a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, or make an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).
- 16.13.4 Both the notification and announcement must provide information on the number and nature of the specimens or 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.

Disposal by destruction

- 16.14 If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.
- 16.15 It is acceptable to destroy material of low intrinsic significance (duplicate mass-produced articles or common specimens which lack significant provenance) where no alternative method of disposal can be found.
- 16.16 Destruction is also an acceptable method of disposal in cases where an object is in extremely poor condition, has high associated health and safety risks or is part of an approved destructive testing request identified in an organisation's research policy.
- 16.17 Where necessary, specialist advice will be sought to establish the appropriate method of destruction. Health and safety risk assessments will be carried out by trained staff where required.
- 16.18 The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, e.g. the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.

Appendix 1.
Theatre:IDEASpace Model

Theatre:Ideaspace



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