

Cincinnati Art Museum Archives ACCESS POLICY

The Cincinnati Art Museum Archives collects, preserves and makes accessible the records of the Cincinnati Museum Association (1881-present), the Cincinnati Art Museum (1886-present), and the Art Academy of Cincinnati (1868-1998). The personal papers of individuals linked to the Museum's permanent collection are also collected, as are materials created by or relating to Cincinnati artists and art organizations, past and present.

The Archives recognizes the value of these records both to the Museum and to the wider community, and is committed to making them accessible to staff and external researchers on a fair and equitable basis within the parameters established by this policy.

Physical Access

- Records in the Archives are available for consultation by Cincinnati Art Museum staff ("CAM staff") and by qualified external researchers ("researchers"), e.g. museum/academic professionals, authors, graduate students, who demonstrate a need to access primary sources in the Archives' collection. All requests for access by external researchers are considered on a case by case basis.
- Archival materials will only be made available in the Mary R. Schiff Library reading room during regular opening hours (Tuesday-Friday 11.00am-5.00pm) under the supervision of Library/Archives staff. Under no circumstances may archival records be removed from the reading room.
- Researchers wishing to view material from the Archives must make an appointment¹ at least 48 hours before their planned visit.
- When making an appointment, researchers will be asked for details of their research project, including the reasons for undertaking the research and, if known, the records they wish to review.
- Depending on the nature of the research project, the Archives may ask for a letter of confirmation or recommendation from any institution (e.g. museum, university) with which the researcher is associated.
- On their first visit, researchers will be asked to present a photo ID and to read and agree to the terms of the **Archival Researcher Agreement**, which sets out the conditions under which access is granted to the Archives' collections.
- Any researcher who does not act in accordance with this agreement, or who demonstrates carelessness or deliberate destructiveness that endangers the safety of the collections will have their access suspended.

Intellectual Access

- To facilitate access, archival collections are arranged and described according to national and international standards, and are catalogued in greater or lesser detail depending upon expected demand and potential research value.

¹ CAM staff are not required to make an appointment to view archival material, but it may not always be possible to retrieve material on demand.

- Finding aids for the Archives' collections may be consulted in hard-copy in the Mary R. Schiff Library Reading Room; selected finding aids can also be found online at the [OhioLink Finding Aid Repository](#)².

Remote Access

- The Archives is committed to making information about its collections and their content available to researchers unable to visit in person.
- General enquiries concerning the nature and scope of records held in the Archives, and those requiring *limited* research into the content of records are typically answered within 5 working days.
- Where an enquiry is likely to require significant research, involving the collection, assembly or extraction of information, researchers will be encouraged to make an appointment to visit in person; if this is not possible, research will be carried out as staff availability and workload permits. The Archives reserves the right to charge a fee to undertake such requests; if this is the case, the researcher will be notified before any research is undertaken.

Restrictions to Access

- Whilst the Archives aims to provide access to the records in its care to the fullest extent possible, it reserves the right to restrict access for any reason³. For example, access may be refused or limited due to:
 - the physical condition of records;
 - the extent to which an archival collection has been processed (e.g. cataloged);
 - restrictions imposed by donors;
 - the purpose for which access is requested;
 - the sensitivity of the records' contents (i.e. any record that could compromise the Museum's security or operation, or the privacy of any individual).
- There are also certain categories of record that are not made available to external researchers:
 - records of the Board of Trustees and its committees;
 - personnel files;
 - records relating to the acquisition of objects in the permanent collection (e.g. insurance and appraisal information, prices paid for objects, information on donors, vendors, and lenders, gift agreements, contracts and negotiations)
 - financial and legal records;
 - architectural blueprints.
- In certain cases, staff may be able to extract information from otherwise restricted records on behalf of a researcher, or to provide access to a redacted version of a record or file.
- Where the physical condition of a record makes it unusable, researchers may be asked to use a copy in place of the original, or staff may be able to extract information on their behalf.

² <http://ead.ohiolink.edu/xtf-ead/>

³ Whilst access restrictions do not typically apply to CAM staff, access to some records containing sensitive information may be limited.

- Access to restricted records may also be granted to certain non-Museum staff having a legitimate research need (typically persons working on behalf of the Museum, such as interns, volunteers, contractors, etc.) on the understanding that they do not discuss, use, forward, print, copy, photograph, record, or otherwise disseminate sensitive or confidential that is made available without prior approval. Such persons will be required to sign an agreement to this effect.

Copies of Records

- To facilitate access, the Archives allows copying of records in its collection but reserves the right to refuse duplication of any material if, in its judgment, this could result in damage to the records, or if donor, acquisition or legal restrictions prohibit duplication.
- The Archives may also refuse to copy material where the format, size or quantity of records makes it impractical.
- The copying of records on site by researchers is restricted to the use of a personal camera without a flash. No other self-service copying or reproduction is allowed.
- For researchers unable to visit in person, copies of archival records may be requested from the Archives⁴. Copies can be provided electronically, mailed, or made available for collection in person. Copy requests are normally completed within 10 working days, but extensive requests will be completed as staff availability and workload permits. The Archives reserves the right to charge a fee to undertake copy requests; if this is the case, the researcher will be notified before any copies are made.
- Before copies are provided to a researcher, or permission is granted for a researcher to make copies, a copyright disclosure statement must be signed acknowledging that the researcher understands:
 - copies are for private study, scholarship, or research use only;
 - the provision of copies of material from the Archives, or the granting of permission to make copies, does *not* constitute an authorization to publish or reproduce them in any form;
 - permission to publish or reproduce any record from the Archives, in full or in extract, must be applied for in writing from the Head Librarian *prior* to publication;
 - the content may be protected by the copyright law of the United States (Title 17, U.S. Code) and the researcher will be liable for any infringement.

Loan of Archival Material

- The Archives will consider requests for loans from qualified external organizations, such as libraries, museums, and educational institutions, on a case by case basis. Requests may be refused for any reason.
- All borrowers will be required to complete and sign an **Archival Loan Agreement**, which sets out the terms under which the loan is made.

⁴ Copies for research use are typically provided as watermarked JPG files scanned at 150dpi. Copies suitable for publication must be requested separately.