



CITY OF YARRA

**COLLECTION MANAGEMENT
POLICY**

JANUARY 2011

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1. INTRODUCTION

The City of Yarra has a rich cultural heritage; it was the site of seminal Australian artist collectives and cultural institutions and continues to be the home of established and emerging artists.

Yarra Council recognises the importance of documenting our local cultural heritage and the city's unique history and people as an inherent responsibility, and is committed to the ongoing preservation, development, management, and accessibility of the city's Art and Heritage Collection.

The City of Yarra's Collection Management Policy ('the Policy') guides all decisions related to Council's management of the City of Yarra Collection ('the Collection') and role as cultural custodian of this shared heritage.

The Policy, Operational Guidelines and the Collection Asset Management Plan will be reviewed by the City of Yarra Visual Arts Panel every four years.

The documents which form the operational guidelines of the Policy are an integral part of the management of the Collection.

2. THE POLICY CONTEXT

The City of Yarra's Collection Management Policy aims to:

- Describe the Collection's content and future direction.
- Outline the conditions under which the Collection is managed and developed.
- Inform and guide decisions related to the existing Collection and its future scope.
- Ensure best practice in the conservation, storage, display and development of the Collection.

3. VISION

Yarra Council will acquire, preserve, exhibit and make accessible its collection of heritage and contemporary artworks and objects and ensure that the development and management of the Collection displays best practice and reflects the artistic, cultural and political history of the city's development.

4. GOALS

- Ensure the Collection is well managed and cared for as a unique and irreplaceable cultural asset for the present and future enjoyment of all City of Yarra residents and the wider community.
- Increase awareness, understanding, access and appreciation of the Collection.
- Increase awareness of the municipality's history by use and display of the Collection's civic, commemorative and ceremonial artefacts.
- Recognise the City of Yarra's identity as a home to many artists and a site of creative production.

- Allow for local artists' works and their links to the community to be incorporated within the Collection as appropriate.

5. STRATEGIES

Yarra Council will achieve the aims of the Collection through the following:

- Identify a set of clear and accountable processes for managing Council's unique cultural asset.
- Undertake conservation treatment to ensure Collection items are in a condition in which they can be preserved for future generations.
- Ensure that informed strategies are in place for the Collection's storage, preservation and display.
- Promote a cooperative approach between council departments to cohesively document, preserve and use the pictorial and text-based heritage of the city.
- Encourage public engagement with the Collection through loans, research and website access, which articulate the social, historical, artistic, cultural and environmental development of Yarra.
- Enhance public buildings and spaces through display of the Collection, particularly in public areas within Council's town halls.
- Develop the Collection to a standard of relevance and excellence within the cultural context of the city.

6. COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

The Collection is managed by the Arts and Cultural Services Unit which oversees its development, documentation, preservation, storage, and display.

Council is advised on cultural matters by the Yarra Arts Advisory Committee (YAARTS). The City of Yarra Visual Arts Panel ('the Panel') is a sub-committee of YAARTS and its key role is to provide expert advice and make recommendations to Council as required on, but not limited to, the following:

- Acquisition and de-accession proposals.
- Major conservation of works in the Outdoor Collection.
- Public submissions for public art, memorials and monuments commissions.
- Council generated commissions.

See Appendix One: Visual Arts Panel Terms of Reference

7. COLLECTION CATEGORIES

The Collection was founded in 1994, based on the range of artworks and cultural artefacts that the City of Yarra inherited when the municipalities of Collingwood, Richmond and Fitzroy amalgamated.

The Collection is a unique document of the history and people of Yarra and is divided into two main categories, the 'Indoor Collection' and the 'Outdoor Collection'.

The Indoor Collection comprises art, objects and ephemera both unique and significant to the history of the municipality.

The Outdoor Collection includes sculptures, murals, memorials, monuments sculptural landscapes, mosaics and multimedia installations.

7.1 The Indoor Collection

Refers to all Collection items housed and displayed indoors and is subdivided into the following categories:

7.1.1 Heritage Memorabilia Collection

Refers to objects which best illustrate aspects of the historical and physical development of the municipality and Council prior to 1970. Included in this category are items deemed to be unique and of significance to the history of the municipality such as ceremonial and civic objects; archival material including maps and plans, documents and ephemera; and miscellaneous gifts and objects commissioned by Council.

7.1.2 Contemporary Memorabilia Collection

Refers to objects which best illustrate *contemporary* aspects of the civic and physical development of the municipality and Council post 1970. Included in this category are items deemed to be unique and of significance to the municipality such as ceremonial and civic objects; archival material including maps and plans, documents and ephemera and miscellaneous gifts and objects commissioned by Council.

7.1.3 Heritage Fine Art Collection

Refers to artworks produced or commissioned prior to 1970 which best illustrate aspects of the historical and physical development of the municipality and Council. Included in this category are Council portraits and photographs, illuminations, landscapes and illustrations, paintings and works on paper.

7.1.4 Decorative Arts Collection

Refers to original fittings and furniture housed in the Richmond, Fitzroy and Collingwood Town Halls or items previously used in Council buildings. The majority of these items are still in use. Included in this category are antique furniture, significant or unique contemporary furniture, decorative *objects*, stained and etched glass, and sculptures.

7.1.5 Contemporary Fine Art Collection

Consists of all contemporary artworks (post 1970 specifically acquired or commissioned by Council through curatorial and formal art acquisition processes such as donations and bequests. Included in this category are works on paper, paintings, photographs, textiles and sculptures.

7.2 The Outdoor Collection

Refers to all Collection items housed and displayed outdoors and is subdivided into the following categories:

7.2.1 Public Art Collection

The Public Art Collection includes all contemporary sculptures and other permanent or semi-permanent artworks and decorative elements located outdoors. Public art can include mosaics, sculptures, murals, decorative street furniture; built design treatments and related artefacts; billboards, new electronic technologies (e.g. multimedia installations, soundscapes and Internet web sites) and sculptural gardens.

This may also include artworks created for specific locations, temporary installations or art performances in public spaces, artistic concepts integrated in the design of urban or public spaces and the fabrication of unique features for public spaces.

Public art can be of a permanent or temporary nature. Works commissioned by Council which have been created for a specific and limited duration will be administered as part of the Public Art Collection for the nominated period.

7.2.2 Memorials and Monuments Collection

The Memorials and Monuments Collection includes all heritage and contemporary public artworks relating to civic, ceremonial and commemorative events and people in the municipality's history. Included in this category are monuments, memorials, fountains and plaques deemed unique and of significance to the history of the municipality.

8. COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

8.1 Documentation and Cataloguing

The primary tool for the ongoing management of the Collection is the Collection Catalogue. The catalogue includes detailed information and history of all items within the Collection; location of all work; and information regarding conservation requirements and maintenance schedule. The catalogue is to be maintained by the Arts and Cultural Services Unit.

See Operational Guidelines One: Documentation and Cataloguing

8.2 Acquisition

Acquisition is the process by which Council legally and formally accepts objects as part of its Collection.

Items can be proposed for acquisition by members of the community, the Visual Arts Panel or City of Yarra staff and Councillors.

Acquisitions include donations and bequests as well as purchases or commissions by the City of Yarra.

Items for the Contemporary Art Collection are purchased through an acquisition fund.

8.2.1 Preference for acquisition

Preference for acquisition is given to items which meet the aims of the Policy and the following considerations:

- Items that best illustrate the physical, artistic, cultural, social, historical and political identity of the municipality of Yarra.
- Items that have a verifiable connection to the City of Yarra and enhance the scope of the Collection.
- Items that do not require immediate and considerable additional resources related to conservation and storage.
- Items that have the potential for display and exhibition.

Ephemera with a limited or pre-determined life will also be considered for acquisition.

8.2.2 Criteria for acquisition

Criteria for acquisition into specific areas within the Collection are as follows:

- (a) Heritage Memorabilia, Contemporary Memorabilia, Heritage Fine Art and Decorative Arts Collections—
- Objects which relate to the history of the municipality and which build upon the existing Collection.
 - Items which are of high quality and significance. Rare items in poor condition may be acquired if they are deemed significant to the Collection.
 - Objects which fill a gap in the Collection or are otherwise a better representation of the object than currently exists.
- (b) Contemporary Fine Arts Collection—
- Artworks which are by artists born, living or working in Yarra.
 - Artworks which have some relevance to Yarra or build upon the existing Collection.
 - Artworks which are of high quality, by respected emerging and mid-career artists.
 - Artworks which represent emerging and innovative art forms.

See Operational Guidelines Two: General Acquisitions

- (c) Public Art Collection—
- Projects which clearly meet the specific requirements outlined in any brief prepared for the project.
 - Works which are appropriate and relevant to the context of the proposed site, including other artworks in the vicinity.
 - Works which display excellence, innovation and a high standard of contemporary arts practice.

- Projects which are consistent with the current planning, heritage and environmental policies of the City of Yarra.

(d) Memorials and Monuments Collection—

- Works which commemorate a group or individual that has contributed significantly to the artistic, cultural, economic, political or social aspects of Yarra's development, or commemorate a significant anniversary of an event unique to Yarra's history and development.
- Works which address aspects of the City of Yarra's civic, ceremonial or commemorative history that are not already reflected in the current Memorials and Monuments Collection.
- Works which display a high standard of artistic excellence and integrity.
- Projects which are consistent with the current planning, heritage and environmental policies of the City of Yarra.

See Operational Guidelines Three: Public Art, Monuments and Memorials Acquisitions

8.3 De-Accessioning

De-accessioning is the process by which the City of Yarra may legally and officially dispose of Collection items.

All proposals for de-accession are to be undertaken with great caution, thoroughness and consideration. De-accession is not a method for raising revenue. Money raised from the sale of de-accessioned works will be used generally for acquisitions or for the care and development of the Collection.

Items can only be proposed for de-accessioning if they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Items that have no relevance to the Policy aims.
- Certain items that are copies, duplicates or reproductions.
- Certain items that are in poor condition or have suffered irreparable damage.
- Items that have a legal ownership established as other than the Yarra Council.
- Irreparably damaged items with no known provenance.

Items cannot be proposed for de-accessioning on purely aesthetic grounds or if they have been in the Collection for less than five years. Further to this, items with a legal encumbrance prohibiting them from being de-accessioned or with a contested provenance cannot be proposed for de-accessioning.

8.3.1 Methods for Disposal

- Offered for sale or donation to the artist, donor or their family member.
- Donated to the relevant historical society.
- Resold with the subsequent funds to be used for Collection care.
- Destroyed.

See Operational Guidelines Four: De-Accessioning

8.4 Display and Exhibition

8.4.1 Display

The display and promotion of the Collection will seek to enhance and enrich the community's understanding of Yarra's unique cultural and social history.

The Indoor Collection is to be displayed in Council-owned buildings, in particular the town halls, with priority given to areas with high levels of public and staff access, such as foyers and meeting rooms.

The Outdoor Collection is to be displayed in open spaces accessible to the general public, thus encouraging the facilitation and integration of art into the built and natural environments.

8.4.2 Exhibition

Exhibition refers to a curated display of Collection items and any items on loan from an external organisation or individual.

Exhibitions are to be developed in accordance with the aims of the Policy. Works from the Collection and other projects of cultural and social interest will be involved in a regular exhibition program coordinated by the Arts and Cultural Services Unit.

8.5 Loans

Loans are the process by which items in the Collection can be borrowed by other institutions or organisations. Alternatively, Yarra Council may borrow items from other institutions or organisations.

All requests for loan of Collection items must be made in writing and documented as per the Collection loans procedures.

All outgoing and incoming loans of items are to be approved by curatorial staff in consultation with the Coordinator of Arts and Cultural Services.

Loan requests for Collection items valued at \$50,000 and above must be agreed upon and formally approved in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer.

See Operational Guidelines Six: Loans

8.6 Conservation and Care

Yarra Council is committed to the conservation and maintenance of all items in the Collection in accordance with museum recognised conservation standards, where possible.

The Arts and Cultural Services Coordinator and curatorial staff will determine the type and level of conservation treatment applied to individual Collection items, in accordance with the aims of the Policy and relative significance of Collection items, *as well as the appropriate methods for storage, transport, handling and display.*

See Operational Guidelines Seven: Conservation and Care
See Operational Guidelines Eight: Conservation Definitions

See Appendix One: Visual Arts Panel -Terms of Reference.

9. FUNDING

Funding for the Collection may be derived from the following sources:

- Allocations made from within the Arts and Cultural Services Unit or other internal budgets.
- Allocations made through Council's Capital Works budget.
- Allocations made through Council's Asset Management budget.
- External funding such as grants from other government departments, agencies or philanthropic trusts and foundations.
- Partnerships and sponsorship with industry and the private sector.
- Partnerships with the local community.
- Donations, bequests and gifts of money for the Collection or for specific commissions. Donors of items to the Outdoor Collection may be required to provide necessary funds in advance for the maintenance and upkeep of the donated work for an agreed period of time.
- Funds generated from the sale of de-accessioned works from the Collection.

10. APPENDICES

Appendix One: Visual Arts Panel Terms of Reference

VISUAL ARTS PANEL (VAP)

Terms of Reference

1. Background

The City of Yarra inherited a range of indoor and outdoor artworks and cultural artefacts when the Cities of Collingwood, Richmond and Fitzroy amalgamated in 1994. Council recognises the inherent importance of local cultural heritage and accepts responsibility as custodian for all collection items documenting the City's unique history and people.

The City of Yarra will acquire, collect, preserve, research, document, exhibit, interpret and make accessible to the public the original artworks, objects and information that best illustrate the physical, artistic, cultural, social and political history and development of the City of Yarra. These works form the City of Yarra Collection.

The City of Yarra's Collection Management Policy ('the Collection Policy') guides all decisions related to Council's management of the City of Yarra Collection ('the Collection') and role as cultural custodian of this Collection.

Public art is a growing and changing form of contemporary art that presents a range of opportunities and challenges for Council. Public art may be commissioned and produced by various means including by Council, community groups, artists and private developers.

The City of Yarra Public Art Policy ('the Public Art Policy') provides a framework for assessment of works to be commissioned or acquired by purchase, donation or transfer. It sets out guidelines for Council in facilitating privately commissioned works that have public benefit and it articulates the management framework for Council managed public artworks.

2. Purpose

Council is advised on cultural matters by the Yarra Arts Advisory Committee (YAARTS). The City of Yarra Visual Arts Panel is a sub-committee of YAARTS. The Visual Arts Panel ('the Panel') provides a formal mechanism for Council to seek specialist advice as required on matters related to the management of the Collection and public art.

The key role of the Panel is to:

- a) Contribute to policies and strategies related to the Collection and public art;
- b) Assist with acquisition, commissioning and de-accessioning processes as required;
- c) Advise on acquisition proposals of over \$5000;
- d) Represent YAARTS on reference groups related to Council generated commissions where required; and

- e) Advocate for public art.

3. Membership

The Panel has a core membership of 10, including the following:

- a) A YAARTS Councillor;
- b) A YAARTS representative;
- c) The Senior Coordinator of Arts Culture and Venues; and
- d) Seven ordinary members selected as local cultural industry representatives with a minimum of two visual artists.

4. Panel Quorum

A quorum for the Panel comprises:

- a) A Councillor, or the Senior Coordinator of Arts Culture and Venues, or a representative of the Senior Coordinator;
- b) A YAARTS representative; and
- c) Three local cultural industry representatives.

5. Co-opted Members

Arts and Cultural Services may invite suitably skilled persons to join the Panel in an advisory capacity, for a specified purpose and for a specified period of time. Co-opted members are not entitled to vote.

6. Term of Office

The term of office for ordinary members is for a period of three years. Members must demonstrate a strong link to the City of Yarra, such as be a resident, own property or business, work, study in the City of Yarra.

When vacancies arise new members will be invited to apply. Potential members must make a written application, including a resume.

The appointment of Panel members is by recommendation from staff of Arts and Cultural Services to the Director of Community Programs; the appointment of a new member is ratified by the Chief Executive Officer.

The Councillor representatives are appointed by Council in December each year.

In the event of a member resigning during their term, the Arts and Cultural Services Unit will appoint a replacement in accordance with the procedures for appointing new members, including ratification by the Chief Executive Officer.

7. Member Responsibilities

In order to fulfil the Panel's objectives, members are expected to:

- a) Keep informed of current developments, issues and concerns in regard to collection management practices and public art;
- b) Be familiar with the City of Yarra's Collection Management Policy and the Public Art Policy and other relevant documents; and
- c) Prepare for and actively participate in meetings.

8. Reporting Procedures

The Panel is not a formal standing Committee of Council, but rather a sub-committee of YAARTS that has been established by Council.

Where necessary, reports and recommendations made by the Panel must seek Council approval at scheduled Council meetings before being fully endorsed and acted upon.

9. Management of the Panel

(a) Chairperson

The Chairperson shall be appointed by the Panel.

(b) Meetings

Meetings shall be arranged at regular intervals as determined by the Panel or as required.

(c) Panel Support

The Panel will be resourced by a Council Officer who will be responsible for preparation of minutes, agendas, reports and other administrative functions.

10. Conflict of Interest

(a) Definition

A Panel member is considered to have a conflict of interest if the member:

- i) has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the matter; or
- ii) is of the opinion that their interest in the matter may conflict with their proper performance of duties in respect to the matter.

(b) Disclosure

If a member has a conflict of interest with a matter that is to be, or is likely to be, discussed at a Panel meeting, the member must:

- i) disclose the nature of the conflict of interest immediately before the discussion; or
- ii) if not intending to be present at the meeting, disclose the nature of the conflict of interest to the Senior Coordinator of Arts Culture and Venues before the meeting is held.

While any discussion or vote is taken relating to the matter, the member must:

- iii) leave the room and notify the Chairperson that they are doing so; and
- iv) remain outside the room or other area in view or hearing of the room.

After the discussion, the Chairperson must notify the member that they may return to the room.

The declaration and nature of the conflict of interest must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

11. Public Statements

Ordinary members of the Panel cannot make public statements on behalf of Council as an independent group without prior approval of the Senior Coordinator of Arts Culture and Venues.