



# New England Regional Art Museum Limited

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## COLLECTIONS POLICY

### Background

New England Regional Art Museum houses the Howard Hinton Collection, the Chandler Coventry Collection, and the Armidale City Collection. The Art Museum is constantly acquiring, through donations and purchases, further works to complement the existing collections.

The Hinton Collection, in the sheer breadth of its cover of Australian art from the 1880s to the 1940s, is the only collection of its kind in Australia. English born Howard Hinton was a Trustee of the Art Gallery of NSW, and an avid collector of art and visitor of artists' studios. He developed his collection for the purpose of encouraging artists, educating students, and for the benefit and enjoyment of the public. He first donated works from his collection to the Armidale Teachers College in 1929 and, by the time of his death in 1948, had donated over 1,200 works. The Collection reflects Hinton's early love for Victorian travel paintings as well as respect for the conventions of Australian landscape art, and it included works by most of the early Australian artists. The Lindsay family is strongly represented as is Streeton, Roberts, Gruner, Hilder, Murch and Feint.

The Coventry Collection was described by the former Director of the Australian National Gallery, James Mollison as one of the most important private collections of contemporary, Australian art.

Chandler Coventry, born in Armidale into a pastoral family, began collecting the works of contemporary Sydney artists in the 1960s. He gave his first donation to the Armidale City Gallery in 1966. The Collection strongly reflects the art movements of the 1960s and 1970s. The focus is on expressionist and abstractionist painters with some figurative artists and include paintings by Balson, Christmann, Watkins, Taylor, Booth, Whiteley, Miller and Voigt. It also holds works by a number of overseas artists including Bridget Riley, Christo, and Gene Davis.

The Armidale City Collection was begun in 1963 and, over the years has maintained the standard of the two major collections in the Art Museum.

The NERAM Collection was begun in 1983 and comprises contemporary Australian art. The Art Museum purchases works of art, and receives donations from both collectors and artists. With the assistance of the Australia Council, The Ministry for the Arts and fundraising including from the Packsaddle Committee, the Art Museum has made several important purchases including works by Suzanne Archer, Jenny Barwell, David Fairbairn, Christopher Hodges, Wendy Stavrianos and Salvatore Zofrea. Among donations the Art Museum has accepted works by Martin Boscott, Dale Frank, Rosalie Gascoigne, George Gittoes, James Gleeson, Max Miller, Tony Tuckson, David Rankin, John Peart, Brett Harris and Aida Tomescu.

## Acquisition Policy

New England Regional Art Museum will acquire works of art:

1. which improve the standard of representation of important artists already in the Collections;
2. which add, in a significant way, to works of a period already represented in the Collections;
3. by contemporary artists or groups which extend the existing Collections in some relevant way, reflecting the diversity of artistic practice in terms of theme, media etc.;
4. by contemporary artists or groups which significantly echo the current visual culture of Australia; and
5. which reflect significant developments in the visual arts of the New England region.
6. over which it can exercise responsible custodianship.

The primary responsibility of New England Regional Art Museum is to build on its existing Collections; to acquire works by artists represented in the Collections and whose works add to the existing themes, subject matter and styles. As well, to acquire works by artists that extend the existing Collections and support the aims set by Howard Hinton and Chandler Coventry.

An Art Management Committee of recognised experts assesses each art work under consideration for acquisition and makes recommendation to the Board for approval prior to contracts for purchase or donation being executed.

NERAM reserves the right to decline the donation of artworks that do not meet the criteria of the Acquisitions Policy.

# De-accession and Disposal Policy

## 1. PURPOSES OF DEACCESSIONING

- 1.1. removing works determined to be unfit or inappropriate for the collection
- 1.2. reducing storage and maintenance costs
- 1.3. rationalising, consolidating and focusing the collection
- 1.4. generating income for further collection development

## 2. CRITERIA FOR DEACCESSIONING

The following classes of work may be considered for deaccessioning:

- 2.1. works which may not have been lawfully obtained by the Museum or which may legitimately be claimed by an individual or their heirs, trustees or representatives
- 2.2. works which are in poor physical condition which are beyond restoration to a level suitable for public display or scholarly use
- 2.3. works which have been determined to be forgeries, or which have been falsely or wrongly attributed
- 2.4. duplicates of a print or multiple whose retention serves no purpose for public display, scholarly use
- 2.5. with the exception of special study collections, works which fall below the general level of aesthetic quality or historical significance in the Museum's representation of an artist, period or style
- 2.6. works which fall outside the parameters of the collection, as defined by the Museum's Acquisition Policy at the time of deaccessioning

## 3. RESTRICTIONS

The following works will generally not be considered for deaccessioning:

- 3.1. works which were acquired less than ten years prior to the time of the proposed deaccession
- 3.2. works by living artists, unless the artist's views have been taken into account other than where the Museum is unable to locate the artist despite a reasonable effort having been made
- 3.3. works gifted or bequeathed, which have conditions or trusts attached expressly or by implication prohibiting deaccession, without having taken into consideration the views of the donor, the personal representatives of the donor's estate

#### **4. PROCEDURES**

The following steps shall be followed in deaccessioning a work:

- 4.1. A proposal for deaccessioning shall be initiated by the Curator or at the request of the Director or the Board of NERAM Ltd.
- 4.2. Museum's clear and unrestricted title in the work shall be established;
- 4.3. A written deaccession proposal shall be prepared by the responsible Curator through the Director to the Board (see Appendix I):
- 4.4. The work shall be approved in principle for deaccessioning on the absolute majority
- 4.5. Notice of an 'in principle' deaccession shall be publicly advertised and the Minister for the Arts informed of the deaccession proposal and forwarded a copy of the Notice
- 4.6. The public notice will specify a period to enable representations to be made. Under normal circumstances a period of three months should generally elapse between the public notice and the final resolution relating to the deaccessioning and disposal
- 4.7. The Board will take into account the representations made; approval of deaccessioning takes a unanimous vote

#### **5. DISPOSAL**

A deaccessioned work shall be disposed of by one of the following means:

- 5.1. transfer to another museum or appropriate public institution
- 5.2. exchange with another museum or appropriate public institution
- 5.3. exchange with a collector or dealer
- 5.4. sale by public tender
- 5.5. sale by public auction
- 5.6. returns to the original owner, their heirs, trustees or representatives
- 5.7. audited destruction

**\*\*NOTE:** In the case of exchange or sale other than by public auction, at least one independent valuation of the work and in the case of exchange with a collector or dealer at least two independent authentications and valuations shall be obtained prior to the exchange or sale, from a qualified external assessor. In relation to an exchange (clause 2 & 3) and after certified valuations and authentication, payment of a sum of money shall be made or received in recognition of the difference in value between the works exchanged if appropriate.

## **6. DISPOSAL RESTRICTIONS**

6.1. Under no circumstance shall a deaccessioned work be purchased by or transferred or given to any Trustee or employee of the Museum or any member of their immediate families.

## **7. PROCEEDS FROM SALE**

7.1. Proceeds from the sale of a deaccessioned work shall be reserved and applied only to upgrading the collection, either by

7.1.1. acquisitions, with priority given if appropriate to works for the same area of the collection or

7.1.2. conservation and care of the collections or

7.1.3. to a foundation formed for that purpose – currently the NERAM Foundation

7.2. Where practicable, the credit line of a work acquired with the proceeds of the disposal of a donated work shall acknowledge the original donor

## **Terms of Reference for the NERAM Art Management Committee**

The Committee is made up of art experts which can include representatives from major art institutions in Sydney, practising artists, art/museum professionals and NERAM staff. One member is appointed by the NERAM Ltd Board. The Art Management Committee reports to, and makes recommendations to the NERAM Ltd Board.

### **Objectives:**

1. To assess the current state of the collections, particularly NERAM Collection, to rationalise, consolidate and focus the collection as required but no less than once a year.
2. To assess proposed donations of works of art for inclusion in the collections.
3. To identify works of art that are unfit or inappropriate or fall below the general level of aesthetic quality in the NERAM's representation of an artist, period or style.
4. To advise on de-accession and/or relocation measures deemed necessary towards reduction of storage and maintenance costs.
5. To review and update NERAM collection policies.
6. To formally de-accession works as in 3 and 4 (above), following which the committee will determine the most appropriate means of dispersal to the best advantage of NERAM, including:
  - a) transfer to another museum or appropriate public institution
  - b) exchange with another museum or appropriate public institution
  - c) exchange with a collector or dealer
  - d) sale through public auction or dealer
  - e) destruction