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Art Collections; An Organization Analysis

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Abstract

Visual art is an important part of any society. Humans have collected and studied visual art throughout history. The way that artwork is collected and maintained dictates the way that the collection is managed and maintained dictates what artworks will be available to be studied and displayed in the future. Today in the United States artworks are mostly managed in collections of nonprofit art organizations. Nonprofit art organizations come in all forms. The goals and functions of the organization directly influence how the artwork collection is managed. To demonstrate the various ways that different types of organizations maintain and organize their art collections this paper will analyze three different art organizations from the same community. The Archie Bray Foundation, Holter Museum, and Montana Historical Society all treat the art in their collections differently based on their overall goals and mission statement. Information has been compiled through interviews with those who work with the art collections, personal experience as a collections assistant, and information provided by each organization. The paper will conclude with a summary of similarities and differences each institution and potential suggestions to improve management of each collection.
Art Collections; An Organization Analysis

In the world of art, an object’s form often reflects its functions. This is also true of the organizations that interact with these art objects. This thesis examines how art institutes manage their permanent art collections based on the mission, and function, of the organization as a whole.

In order to demonstrate how an organizations mission influences the management of art collections, three organizations from the same art community, Helena Montana, will be studied. The Holter Museum of Art, Archie Bray Foundation, and Montana Historical Society are all organizations that interact with artwork. Each organization has a distinct mission that influences how they treat their art collection. The influence that the mission has on the organizations’ collection can be seen in the way they present their work, organize it, and manage it.

The analyses for each institute includes three sections. The first section consists of the official written mission statement and goals. The second section includes a brief description of the organization and its history. The third will be a detailed look at each of the permanent collections. Though each nonprofit manages a variety of artifacts and artworks, the priority of this paper is to focus on the management of works accessioned into the collection. The permanent collection analysis will include a description of the facilities, guidelines for handling artwork, the formation of the collection, and examples of artwork. This analysis is formed through personal experience with art collections, interviews with members of the organizations, institutional documentation, and other various sources. After the
analyses there will be a brief compare and contrast section of the three institutional styles, a short critique to suggest improvements to collection management, and finally a summary.
The Montana Historical Society

Official Statements of Organization

Statutory Mandate: “...an agency of state government for the use, learning, culture, and enjoyment of the citizens of the state for the acquisition, preservation, and protection of historical records, art, archival, and Museum objects, historical places, sites, and monuments and the custody, maintenance, and operation of the historical library, Museums, art galleries, and historical places, sites, and monuments” (Montana Historical Society).

The Montana Historical Society Mission Statement: “The Montana Historical Society exists for the use of learning, culture and enjoyment of the citizens of, and visitors to, the State of Montana by: acquiring, preserving and protecting historical records, art, archives, Museum objects, historical places, sites and monuments; maintaining a library and an historical Museum, providing educational programs and services for teachers and the general public, and publishing the state historical magazine and books; administering preservation and antiquities acts, supporting commissions with state historical orientation, and providing technical assistance to all Montana Museums, historical societies, preservation programs and owners of historical resources” (Montana Historical Society).
Goals and Objectives of Museum:

- “To systematically develop and improve the Museum’s permanent collection through the acquisition of art and artifacts appropriate to the mission of the Society, i.e., items that pertain to the history and culture of Montana and the geographic region.

- To preserve the Museum collections for the use and enjoyment of future generations through the maintenance and improvement of clean, safe and controlled environments; the adherence to Museum standards of collections care; the improvement of collections management, specifically by automating permanent records; regular maintenance of the historic house Museum we administer, i.e. the Original Governor’s Mansion; and the expansion of our commitment to artifact conservation.

- To protect and preserve the permanent artwork in the State Capitol, and within the Capitol Complex, by inspecting, maintaining, and arranging for conservation of the art, in addition to the care and preservation of art items removed from the Capitol.

- To provide quality educational exhibits and programming for our statewide and national audiences at Montana’s Museum, the Original Governor’s Mansion and the State Capitol through: maintenance and upgrading of permanent exhibits; the development of at least one major temporary exhibit per year; the development of occasional traveling exhibits for statewide distribution; the continued restoration of the historic house Museum we administer, i.e. the Original Governor's Mansion;
and the planning and implementation of educational programming to reach as many segments of our audience and the largest number of people as possible with a variety of activities, such as guided and self-guided tours, lectures, workshops, school programs, conferences, etc. During FY06 Montana's Museum had 38,776 visitors, not only from all over the United States and the world, including individuals, adult tours, school tours, etc. There were 1,646 visitors to the Original Governor's Mansion; 11,273 people toured the State Capitol; and 43,649 people attended public programs or were provided outreach services.

- To provide accurate information on historical and technical subjects to individuals, representatives of cultural organizations, governmental agencies, the educational community and others through the timely response to inquiries about the Museum collections; assistance to scholars and students working on Museum related topics; the maintenance and distribution of photographs of Museum collections; technical assistance provided to other Museums and cultural institutions; and the presentation of programs related to material culture and technical topics to interested groups throughout the state.

- To administer and expand the Volunteer Program of the Society. Over 134 volunteers assist paid staff in providing interpretation of Montana history, art and culture through tours, school services, conferences, workshops and other public events; providing reference information to patrons; and assisting with collections care and management to help preserve Montana's material culture.” (Montana Historical Society)

About The Montana Historical Society Museum
The Montana Historical Society Museum is a small part of a statewide government run and funded organization, the Montana Historical Society, dedicated to preserving the history of Montana. The Museum itself is used to house specific items with pertinence to Montana's history. Like the Society's historical artifacts the artwork of the Museum must be valuable to the history of the state of Montana and, as property of the state, and due to legislature, must be intensely regulated by national standards.

The Montana Historical Society was created in 1865; it is the oldest historical society west of the Mississippi river and has been located in Helena since 1874 (Montana Historical Society). Today, the Montana Historical Society is located across from the state capital and next to other state government buildings. The Museum is located in the same building as the rest of the organization; which consists of a research center, help desk, and several other main offices for the Historical Society. The Museum portion of the organization is split into three different galleries, three storage spaces and several office areas.

The Montana Historical Society has very specific goals and statements concerning each department of the organization. One of the Research Center’s goals is “to develop and improve the nation’s most comprehensive collection of research materials related to the history of Montana and the West” (Montana Historical Society). The Museum department is concerned with the preservation, collection, and display of historical items for the benefit of the public. The researchers work mostly with historical records of while the Museum staff focuses on the presentation and maintenance of physical objects.
Montana Historical Society Museum Permanent Collection Management

The purpose of the Museum’s collection is to expose and educate the public about the history of Montana. The Museum meets the goals of the organization by presenting three to six exhibits a year. As fulfillment of the Montana Historical Society’s mission statements the exhibits are presented “for the use of learning, culture and enjoyment of the citizens of, and visitors to, the State of Montana” (Montana Historical Society). The exhibits are produced based on a specific time period or movement in Montana history. The exhibits often display a combination of artwork that is relevant to the theme of the exhibit and historical artifacts. For example, this year they exhibited a collection of artifacts and artwork, in the form of advertisements, that involved domestic life for women during the Industrial Revolution (Nucci). Educational information about the historical items, artwork, and general themes are provided throughout the exhibit. The information is typically presented in a plaque or poster alongside the artwork (Nucci). In addition to the exhibits the society also offers a historical bus tour of Helena that starts and ends at the museum. These activities and exhibits allow visitors and locals to learn through the exhibits and the local architecture.

The American Association of Museums accredits the Montana Historical Society’s Museum, this is “the highest honor a Museum can receive” (Nucci). The Museum received its accreditation by following the standards set by the American Alliance of Museums in regards to maintaining, organizing, and cataloging art objects. The Museum department has three galleries, two indoor vaults and one outdoor storage space. The small vault is used to store artwork and the other two are used for
historical artifacts. These three galleries are used to present the Museum’s collection to the public.

The artwork vault holds, artwork, rare high priority pieces, and works on loan. The storage utilities in the artwork vault consist of: several large vertical rolling shelves for framed works with glass, ten to fifteen small rolling racks for framed works without glass, two large shelving racks for bronze pieces, and four cabinets with drawers for unframed two dimensional pieces. The artwork vault follows the criteria laid out by the American Alliance of Museums for the safety of the artworks. The vault is humidity controlled, and all art objects are organized and secured so that they will withstand an earthquake (Nucci).

The larger artifacts vault holds historical artifacts that were common during certain time periods. The artifacts are arranged based on their function. Some sections that are located here are; pianos, advertisements, clothing, every day objects, farming equipment, and hunting tools. This room is filled with tables for objects to be placed upon, vertical rolling racks, shelves, cabinets, drawers, etc. The other artifacts storage area is a warehouse located offsite. It holds the larger and more durable artifacts from the permanent collection, such as wagons, architectural pieces, and huge bronzes.

To assure the safety of the collection the Montana Historical Society has many security structures in place. The basement, which houses the onsite collection, is only accessible with a Museum staff key card. The art and artifacts are located within the basement in locked vaults that require a physical key. There are also security cameras and a security staff that make the rounds throughout the building. In addition
to these preventative measures the security staff requires copies of removal forms and loan paperwork be copied and filed before objects can leave the building.

The Montana Historical Society employs several people in the Museum department to maintain the high standards of the organization. The Institution also regularly hires contracted conservers to maintain and analyze specific objects. Qualified volunteers are also recruited to help with museum projects. On average there are about nine people working regularly with artifacts (Nucci).

In addition to its standing as an accredited institution the organization has also been using the same database, PastPerfect, for over fifteen years (Nucci). The organization has used the same software for years. Those involved with the database have developed an advanced understanding of the system and created useful procedures for how and when new information is added to it. Not only does the software include information about artifacts, but also it includes information about the Historical Society’s archives and Research department. The Research department has the physical records of the organization. The Montana Historical Society Museum contains 50000 artifacts total, 8000 of which are pieces of art (Nucci). Each item is labeled, accessioned, organized, filed, and inventoried regularly.

Proper documentation is incredibly important to the Society in order to provide accurate information about Montana History. Objects and artwork must be researched before they can be considered for accessioning. After the proper research has been done the Museum staff then provides information on items they would like added to the collection to an appointed collections committee (Nucci). The collections committee then approves the work for accessioning if appropriate. Since the museum
staff consists of trained, educated historians they occasionally have the authority to immediately accept an object into the collection.

In order for an object to be added to the permanent collection it must be relevant to the History of Montana; the piece must either have belonged to a well known historical figure or exemplify life in a certain time period. The Museum also only accepts a certain number of items. For example currently the collection has an abundance of pianos so it is unlikely they will accept another one unless it is of high historical significance (Nucci). Because the organization is committed to preserving and presenting all aspects of the history of Montana the collection is constantly growing. Historical significance far outweighs artistic significance.

Two examples of artworks that have been accepted into the Museums collection are works Charlie M. Russell and the Poindexter Collection. While their art styles of these are completely different both of their works are important to the collection.

Charlie M. Russell is arguably the first great Montanan painter who lived and created works during the settlement period of the west. His works depict beautiful scenery of an untamed land and the rich culture of the Native people (Montana Historical Society Museum). This romanticized image of a wild Montana is widely known even today. His artwork obviously fulfills the Organization’s goals to preserve and cultivate historical items and is an important part of the Museum’s collection.
Upon first glance the Poindexter Collection is a less obvious choice for inclusion within the permanent collection. The Poindexter Collection consists of works from New York abstract expressionist artists. What makes these works relevant is the fact that they are significant to the history of America and represent one of the heights of the American modern art movement. The collection features works from internationally famous artists such as Willem de Kooning and Jackson Pollock. The collection is also important to Montana because it was acquired by a well-known Montanan named E. George Poindexter. Poindexter specifically created this collection with the intent to expose Montanans to this style of art (Yellowstone Art Museum).
The purpose of the Museum’s collection is to expose and educate the public about the history of Montana. The way this is done depends largely upon those who utilize the collection for exhibits. Sarah Nucci, the Museum’s Curator of History believes that “We don’t own the collection, we care-take the collection. If you don’t see what happened in the past you can’t learn for the future” (Nucci). The belief shapes the way that she creates the exhibits. In order to “tell a story”, she states “Our collection isn’t to tell the story of the famous people, although we do that, it’s to tell the story of ALL of the people of Montana – and to realize that they all have value today, yesterday, and in the future” (Nucci).

Due to The Montana Historical Society’s ties to local government, and its’ mission to preserves artifacts as well as communicates its’ states history, the Museum follows strict standards for documentation and organization. This approach allows the Museum staff to understand the artworks and artifacts in the
collection. The staff’s understanding of the collection allows the Museum to present a full and colorful story of Montana’s History to those who visit the Museum.
The Archie Bray Foundation

Mission Statement

“To make available to all who are seriously interested in any branch of the ceramic arts, a fine place to work. The Corporation will provide facilities for the creation of artistic works and association with other serious artists as the foundation for creative growth. Professional relationships and personal friendships among residents, staff, board of directors and community will be encouraged as the basis for building a creative climate and together, residents, staff and board of directors will encourage the development and enjoyment of the arts” (Archie Bray Foundation).

About the Archie Bray Foundation

The Archie Bray Foundation is an organization that provides a creative and supportive atmosphere for resident ceramicists to further their artistic growth in the ceramic arts. In order to do this the organization provides artists residencies for a select number of ceramic artists. The foundation provides a studio, access to kilns, fellowships, scholarships, exhibits of current artists works and an overall creative atmosphere to the artists who participate in the organization.

The organization was founded in 1951 in order to “make available for all who are seriously interested in ceramic arts, a fine place to work” (Archie Bray Foundation). The Archie Bray Foundation was built on what used to be the grounds of the Western Clay Manufacturing Co (Archie Bray Foundation). It includes old huge kilns for brick-making and a beautiful landscape. Those who are interested in
the creation of ceramic art can come to the organization in order to develop their skills and creativity.

The success of the Archie Bray is largely due to the high caliber of ceramic artists that have been involved with the organization. Some notable artists who have helped shape the Archie Bray are Frances Senska, a pioneer for Montanan ceramicists, Rudy Autio, Josh Deweese, and internationally recognized ceramicist Peter Voulkos (Newby, Jiusto and Failing). These ceramicists’ works were influential to the early American modern art movement and are highly respected today. These are some of the notable artists who have taken leadership positions at the Archie Bray and who helped shape the modern ceramics movement in the United States by forming clay in the abstract expressionist style. Their leadership has molded the Archie Bray into the internationally recognized organization that it is today.

Today the Archie Bray has had over six hundred ceramic artists in residence (Lee). It is located in a very open rural part of town but still is close to the downtown Helena area. The Archie Bray consists of two studio complexes, a sales gallery, a permanent collection gallery, a main office building, outside kilns, a warehouse, an additional gallery and a clay business. The Archie Bray rests on twenty-six acres of land.

The Archie Bray Foundation is an especially beautiful area for artists and the community to visit because of its large grounds; which are covered with ceramic artwork. These works have naturally accumulated over the years. Artist residents often leave pieces behind and place them in strategic areas on the grounds. This creates an interesting and offbeat environment.
The Archie Bray hosts events for the resident artists and for the community to grow in their appreciation of ceramic art. The Bray offers receptions for exhibits where the public can come and see artwork that has been created by the resident artists. The Foundation also offers classes for the public and guest artist lectures. Current resident artists often teach these classes.

The Archie Bray Foundation has succeeded in becoming a great resource for ceramic artists. Their residencies allow them to focus on creating works of art and involving themselves in the community that the Archie Bray forms.

**Archie Bray Foundation Permanent Collection Management**

What is particularly interesting about the Archie Bray's collection is that it was formed by artists wanting to leave works at the Archie Bray. This emphasis on the resident artists has deeply shaped the way that the collection is formed and managed.

The facilities for the permanent collection include one warehouse, two storage rooms in separate gallery buildings, the summer studios building, and the grounds of the Foundation itself. Some of the artwork is carefully stored while other pieces are displayed. Artists are encouraged to explore previous works for inspiration.

The permanent collection has occasionally been shown as a traveling exhibit. This is a way for the Foundation to reach artists and art lovers who have never visited its grounds. The last large traveling exhibit was during the Foundation’s fiftieth anniversary. Eighty pieces from the collection were chosen and traveled
together for over a year. The formation of this large exhibit was also used to publish a book about the Archie Bray for its fiftieth anniversary.

The works that are stored reside in one warehouse and the storage rooms of two galleries. The ceramics are stored in earthquake proof containers in order to protect them from damage. The containers are labeled with the accession number of the piece and a photograph of the piece or pieces inside the container.

Displayed works of the collection are located in three different buildings. The Pottery gallery solely exhibits works from the permanent collection, rotates regularly, and is curated by the Gallery Director. The second location is in the new sales gallery. Here, a small section of the gallery regularly rotates and displays either works for sale by residents or works not for sale from the permanent collection. The last smallest exhibit is located in the summer studio and is in two glass display cases. These works are especially important to the organization. The ceramics displayed were created by founding members of the organization and serve as reminders of the Brays rich history.

One of the ways that the permanent collection of the Bray serves as a source of inspiration to ceramic artists is by literally creating an environment full of artwork. The grounds of the Archie Bray are covered with hundreds of ceramics. Some of the pieces are works that artists simply chose not to take with them after the end of their residency. Other ceramics have been created specifically to add to the surrounding landscape. These site-specific works are often especially durable and created specifically as the artists’ contribution to the Bray’s permanent
collection. If the site-specific works are exceptionally large a committee must approve their construction.

The Archie Bray’s permanent collection includes between 1000 and 2000 works (Lee). Recently the Foundation received a grant to work on documenting their permanent collection. They purchased the PastPerfect database to record their current collection. The collection grows by about fifteen to twenty pieces a year and with each piece comes more information to store. The collection grows because the Bray annually has between ten and twenty artists participate as residents who leave behind artwork.

All of the staff and volunteers at the Archie Bray have had experience handling ceramics. There are no strict written guidelines to handling ceramic arts but everyone who is involved with the collection is expected to have first hand experience with ceramics. The collection is maintained regularly by the Gallery Director, Maintenance Manager, and occasionally by the Resident Artist Director (Lee). All three people are ceramic artists themselves and have a deep understanding of how to handle ceramics. Other ceramic artists often volunteer to help organize and document the collection. Volunteering with the collection can be a great way to see some of the most innovative ceramic works in the country.

The works that are accessioned into the collection act as another resource to fuel creativity in future resident artists. The Bray is not a collecting organization in the same way that museums collect artwork and did not initially set out to collect artwork. Occasionally, the Archie Bray accepts donated artwork into its collection. In order for this to happen the artwork must have a significant tie to the Foundation.
The collection rose out of artists desire to give important pieces to the Bray. Today every resident artist can participate in forming the permanent collection. The residents are often asked to create a work specifically for the collection. This piece should "represent their work and their experience with the organization" (Lee).

Two examples of works left behind are Robert Harrison's *Aruina* and Peter Voulkos' *Plate*. Both works were created by artists with direct ties to the Archie Bray Foundation.

Robert Harrison was a ceramics instructor at the Bray during 1985, a resident artist in 1988, and has had various positions on the board of the Archie Bray, including president, from 1993 to 2005 (Harrison). His piece *Aruina* is a site-specific piece that adds to the beauty of the Bray's grounds. Harrison created the piece in 1988 during his artist residency. *Aruina* is an architectural sculpture with five columns and four arches. It stands twelve feet high and thirty feet long and is composed of brick and tile. Some of the bricks found in this sculpture date back to around 1900 when the original Clay business was running (Newby, Robert Harrison: Shrines for Potters).
Peter Voulkos was not only a founding member of the Archie Bray but a highly influential sculptor. His abstract style of work helped shape modern ceramics by demonstrating unconventional styles and prioritizing artistic value over functionality. His work *Plate* was created after he and the Archie Bray had received national press for his work. The piece is a fantastic example of the abstract expressionist style that Voulkos is known for. His work has gained international recognition. He is often mentioned in today's art history books and his ceramics are in collections from all over the world (Stokstad and Cothren). His works are an example of the innovation and experimentation that ceramic artists can utilize.
The Archie Bray's collection is first and foremost a resource for those who seek to participate in ceramics. It is displayed so that it is easy for the artists to access it for inspiration. Artists maintain part of collection by arranging works strategically around the grounds; adding to the artistic environment of the Bray. The works are handled by expert ceramicists and organized safely. The collection is the physical result of the Bray's mission to have "residents, staff and board of directors [...] encourage the development and enjoyment of the arts" (Archie Bray Foundation).
The Holter Museum of Art

Mission Statement

“The Holter Museum of Art fuels artistic creativity and imagination in Montana through exceptional contemporary art exhibitions, collections, and educational programming” (Holter Museum of Art).

Vision Statement

“Embracing the belief that art vitalizes and strengthens community, the Holter Museum of Art seeks to stimulate creativity, curiosity and collaboration through the visual arts. Our mission is not just in exhibiting art—we interpret it, teach it, help create it, preserve it, and build community through it. We capture the imagination of both the young and the grown through exciting exhibitions and powerful art education. We fuel our community’s curiosity and vision by exploring diverse perspectives and cultures—including contemporary Indian culture—within Montana, beyond the state, and from abroad. We honor the uniqueness of our community, of Helena and of Montana, by celebrating contemporary regional artist in our collection and, through our collection, we seek to preserve for future generations the record of our own time and place in history. Community is at the core of the Holter mission, and we strive to share the richness of the visual arts as a benefit for all” (Holter Museum of Art).

About the Holter Museum of Art.

The Holter Museum is a resource for the artistic advancement of the Montanan community, specifically Helena, through art. In order to meet its mission
and vision statement the Holter offers educational programming, a variety of exhibits throughout the year, fun social events, and a permanent collection featuring Montanan artists.

The Helena Arts Council conceptualized the Museum eight years prior to its opening exhibit, raised funds and searched for a suitable location. The Helena Arts Council saw the need for an art Museum that could collect and display contemporary artwork; especially by local Montanan artists (Reilly, The Holter Permanent Collection).

The Holter Museum owes its financial stability to Montanan art patrons. Most notably are Joan and Norman Jeff Holter for whom the Museum is named after. Norman Holter was born in Helena Montana, graduated from Carroll College and is famous for inventing the Holter heart monitor. The Holter Dam and Holter Lake, located outside of Helena, are also named after him. Norman Holter encouraged the growth of contemporary art in Montana and created artwork of his own; the Holter has two of his works in their permanent collection (Montana Historical Society).

The Museum is located in downtown Helena Montana. Today the location is ideal because of its proximity to other local art galleries and popular local businesses. Its location makes it easy for shoppers and gallery goers to visit the Museum. The Holter Museum consists of: four galleries, including one special high gallery, a small library, two classrooms, a store with two small sale galleries, education department office space, main office space, one loading dock, and three curatorial rooms.
Throughout an average year the Holter will curate between ten and fifteen exhibits not including the two sales galleries, which displays a different exhibit every other month. The type of artwork displayed ranges from pieces by local artists to nationally and internationally traveling exhibits. In order to “celebrate contemporary regional artists in our collection” the Holter exhibits works from the permanent collection on a regular basis (Holter Museum of Art). The Museum offers not only a variety of exhibitions but also an array of educational programs based on the exhibits (Reilly, The Holter Permanent Collection). Educational programs are available for all ages and include art classes, guest artist lectures, workshops, docent tours, family and kid festivals and youth electrums. Annually the education department provides workshops and tours to thousands of children from second to twelfth grade from both the Helena school district and other Montana school districts.

In addition to the significant educational programs that it offers to the community, the Holter also offers fun social events to the public. Opening night receptions are hosted for new exhibits. Every Wednesday during the Christmas shopping season a gallery at the Holter temporarily becomes a restaurant and is catered by local restaurants. Additional other events are available to the public as a way to allow the community to interact with the organization and artwork (Holter Museum of Art).

The Management of the Holter Permanent Collection

As previously mentioned the Holter Museum has three curatorial rooms where artworks are stored, documented, and prepared for exhibits. The rooms are
the preparatory and registrar room, vault, and boxed artwork storage room. The preparatory room’s purpose is to provide space to safely document, examine, maintain, and package artwork. The vault is meant to store the permanent collection. The additional storage room is ideally used as for crated ceramics and pedestals. Because the Museum regularly exhibits works from the permanent collection, artwork must be stored securely and organized so that it is easy to access and move (Reilly, The Holter Permanent Collection).

The preparatory and registrar room is used for handling and documenting artwork. In this room are two large sturdy tables, a desk with a hard drive and dual monitors, and file cabinets. The preparatory room is also currently being used to store some of the collections largest two-dimensional works on high racks along the walls. This organization of this room allows for open space so that art may be safely moved; large tables are regularly used to examine pieces from the permanent collection and prepare them to be displayed in the exhibits.

The Vault is used to organize and safely store the artworks. It consists of: ten storage racks for larger framed two-dimensional artworks. One large cabinet split into three sections is used to store ceramics. One large netted ceramic shelving unit is equipped with foam and gravity hooks. Two small cabinets with drawers are for unframed two-dimensional artworks. A variety of hooks on the wall store additional two-dimensional works. Foam added to the corners of the vault for larger sculptures. Large tapestries are wrapped in acid free paper and stored on top of the large ceramic cabinet and shelving. To make the artwork easy to find each storage device
has a list of what artwork is located in that area and the current location of a piece is updated in the software system.

The additional storage room is used to house the overflow from the collection. In the room are about ten large crates with artworks inside, thirty pedestals of various sizes, and custom made shelving for a large portion of the artwork of Montana artist Josh Deweese (Reilly, The Holter Permanent Collection). Because this room is not humidity controlled, as it was never intended to house artwork, the artwork in this room is mostly large ceramics and is crated or ship ready. The shelves used to store the Deweese collection are lined with plastic sheets and the paintings are individually wrapped in plastic to prevent any moisture damage. The works in this room are large and rarely exhibited so the pedestals, which are used in nearly every exhibit, are at the front of the room.

To protect the permanent collection and other exhibited artworks the storage rooms each have their own unique locks and keys and a motion detecting alarm system that has two different pass codes protects the building. One longer code is used for the entire Museum and a shorter code is used in order to access individual sections of the Museum. The computers holding information about the collection are also password protected.

The Holter currently is without a full time curator so the curatorial duties fall upon one staff member, the Curatorial Assistant/Collections Manager. The Collections Manager relies on volunteers to come in to help document and organize the collection.
Recently the Museum purchased the PastPerfect software database in order to re-organize and document its collection. Currently a team of five collection assistants is manually updating old electronic files, print new hardcopies, and entering information into the new system. The Museum's previous curator has trained only one volunteer; the Collections Manager is responsible for overseeing and training the new untrained volunteers. The Holter currently has 790 artworks accessioned into its permanent collection and over one hundred are entered into the new system (Reilly, The Holter Permanent Collection).

The way that the artwork is handled by volunteers and described is regulated by the written guidelines set by previous curators and collection managers. These guidelines are specifically based on the organization's goals and capacity “to provide the highest quality of storage, exhibition, conservation, and research facilities related to the maintenance and use of the collection”.

The current collections manager has confirmed that, though the existing electronic files list the collection as consisting of 790 artworks, there have been several new large donations of artwork that are yet to be fully accessioned. The entire collection is estimated to be between 790 and 890 items. The Holter Museum has acquired most of the permanent collection through large donations from a donor. A small portion of the collection is acquired through Museum purchases that are funded by either single donors or a group of donors. In order for artworks to be accessioned, de-accessioned, loaned, or purchased a collections committee must approve. After approval the committee must present the pieces to the board during their monthly meeting. During the board meeting the members must vote to
officially include the works in the collection and make other decisions involving the collection (Reilly, The Holter Permanent Collection).

The committee and board base their decision to accession a piece of artwork upon the mission and vision statement of the organization (Toland). The collection consists of artwork that specifically coincides with the mission and vision of the Holter Museum. The mission statement of the Holter Museum outlines the main goals for the organization, particularly fueling artistic creativity in Montana. This vision statement of the organization more specifically addresses the collection:

We honor the uniqueness of our community, of Helena and of Montana, by celebrating contemporary regional artists in our collection and, through our collection, we seek to preserve for future generations the record of our own time and place in history. Community is at the core of the Holter mission, and we strive to share the richness of the visual arts as a benefit for all (Holter Museum of Art).

This means that in order for artwork to be accepted into the permanent collection of the Holter Museum both the collections committee and the board must agree that the piece is not only exceptional and an example of "our time and place" but also it must be contemporary Montanan artwork (Holter Museum of Art).

Two pieces of artwork that fulfill the museum collections requirements are Jane Quick-To-See-Smith’s *Nature/Medicine* and Doug Turman’s *Trout Dream Series*. Both are notable and exceptional Montana contemporary artists. Jaune Quick-To-See-Smith is recognized for her artwork throughout the world. Her work is considered so historically important that it is featured in basic art history textbooks (Stokstad and Cothren). She was born in 1940 and currently creates artwork at the age of 73. Her Native American heritage undoubtedly influences her creative work.
The fact that she is a Native American artist makes her work especially relevant to the goals of the Holter Museum. In the vision statement Native American culture is directly mentioned, “We fuel our community’s curiosity and vision by exploring diverse perspectives and cultures—including contemporary Indian culture...” (Holter Museum of Art). The work in the permanent collection was acquired through a Museum purchase funded by an individual donor prior to the artist’s international fame. The piece *Nature/Medicine* is a lithograph with mixed media and an excellent addition to the Holter’s collection.

Work by artist Doug Turman is also an obvious improvement to the Holter’s Permanent collection. Doug Turman is not as highly recognized as Jaune Quick-To-See-Smith but has experience exhibiting and creating artwork that has been exhibited nationally. (Turman Larison Contemporary). In the last fifteen years he has opened a gallery, which is literally located a block away from the Holter Museum with his wife, and they have exhibited the works of national and international artists. His work is very distinct; playful, imaginative, and explorative. He has also worked with many well-known Montanan artists, such as Lela Autio, Willem Volkersz, and George Gogas, who all have works in the Holter Museum’s permanent collection. His involvement as an artist in the contemporary Montanan art community makes his work relevant to the collection.

It is important to note that the treatment of the permanent collection of an organization is not only dependent upon mission but also upon the passion and opinions of those involved with the collection. For example, the former Curatorial Assistant states that she “believes in the cautious and thorough approach to handling and inventorying artwork”, this influences the way that she treats and handles artwork; “I often find myself double checking a piece for any details that may not have been included in the artwork description, this allows me to make sure that the item will be easy to recognize based on my description and that I am not leaving any important small details out” (Reilly, The Holter Permanent Collection). This prioritization of written detail and documentation has increased the accuracy of the Holter’s database. Phoebe Toland, a collections specialist and former collections manager, prioritized preservation and organization. In her evaluation she writes, “The permanent collection is the museum’s greatest asset. It provides the basis for exhibitions both within the Holter and elsewhere. Its general condition and storage should be evaluated annually. All steps should be taken to ensure its proper care and long term storage” (Toland). Due to her emphasis on physical organization and preservation of art she spent a great deal of time creating safe storage boxes for fragile two-dimensional works.

The collection of the Holter Museum must be managed and created according to the purpose of the organization and its resources. The Holter Museum utilizes its space, staff, and volunteers to keep the artwork orderly and safe. The Permanent collection is structured and managed based on the Holter’s ambition to exhibit work in its permanent collection regularly. The documentation is organized so that it is
readily accessible and the space is utilized so there is ample room to safely move artwork. The collection of artwork itself is based upon the principles and purpose of the Holter Art Museum.

**Compare, Contrast, Suggestions**

Each of these organizations interacts with artwork but have entirely different goals. The goals of an establishment affect how it handles the task of managing artwork.

The Montana Historical Society Museum is the most structured and largest of the organizations. It has the most written guidelines for handling the collection and the most indoor storage space. It is also the only accredited collecting institute. The Society is mainly concerned with preservation of history and education of the public. It spends the most time to compose its exhibits and has the fewest annual exhibits. Because of its attention to detail the database and art objects are meticulously
organized and documented. The Historical Society art collection is a source of pertinent historical information concerning Montana.

The Archie Bray is the most unconventional of the three. Unlike the other two it was not originally intended to have a collection. The collection is utilized as a resource for ceramic artists. The Foundation has the least amount of security due to the works are being accessible to the resident artists. The collection contributes to the excellent environment that is offered to its resident artists.

The Holter organizes its permanent collection so that it the art and information about the art are easily accessible because the Holter is largely concerned with exhibiting works from its collection. Out of all three the Holter has the most events for the community and regularly rotating exhibits. The collection serves as a way to fuel exposure to ceramic art and creativity.

Each organization has overlapping similarities. For example, they all use the Past Perfect database to organize their works. This software is used by most museums within the United States. All also prioritize the physical safety of their collection. Works are stored so that they are earthquake proof and are handled by trained individuals. The three institutions emphasize the importance of being part of the Helena community and have developed programs, such as artists talks, classes, and tours, to foster interaction with the public. Each establishment was founded as a nonprofit to serve a cultural need; the Historical Society for history, the Holter for exposure to art, and the Archie Bray for artistic creation. All three organizations add artwork to their collection based on their mission.

Suggestions
Every organization has certain aspects of their collections that could be improved. Unfortunately all of these improvements require funding from either grants or passionate philanthropists.

One major change that the Holter and the Archie Bray Foundation could apply would be the addition of storage units. These two organizations have collections that are split into different rooms due to limited space. This limitation makes arrangement and accessibility of artwork more difficult and slows down the ability to display and examine the collection. Building or purchasing a new storage area is the only way solve this problem.

The Historical Society could improve their collection management if they were able to increase the amount of exhibits they display annually. Increasing the number of exhibits would draw people into the Museum more regularly and allow their collection to be shared on a larger scale. To do so would most likely require an additional historian to be hired so that exhibits could progress at a faster rate.

**Summary**

The Montana Historical Society Museum, Archie Bray Foundation and Holter Museum all manage their permanent collection based on their mission as an organization. The Montana Historical Society Museum fulfills its mission through its collection by preserving, collecting, and maintaining historically important artworks. The Archie Bray Foundation uses its collection not only as a way to create a fine place to work for ceramicists but also as a source of inspiration for its resident
artists and others. The Holter Museum fuels the arts in Montana by collecting and displaying excellent artwork from within Montana. The form that the collection takes mimics the overall purpose, or function, of the organization.
Appendix A

Mission Statement of the Museum
The Holter Museum of Art serves Montana and neighboring states with a quality visual arts exhibition program that includes all media, brings national and international exhibitions into the region, provides a much-needed venue for local and regional artists and collects, preserves, and interprets significant contemporary Northwest art. Seeking to nurture the creative spirit and to make the arts accessible to all, the Holter is committed to promoting participation by diverse audiences through outreach, innovative educational programming, and collaboration with other organizations.

Vision Statement of the Museum
The Holter Museum of Art is a community-centered facility that serves the general public with a variety of visual arts programs in an effort to educate and enhance the quality of life to its constituents. Increasing and promoting a strong cultural awareness to the broadest possible audience is a guiding factor to our operations. The Museum management and staff take a leadership role in the advocacy of the arts in the Northwest region, and maintain standards of excellence throughout the institution. In order to achieve the mission and goals of the organization, the Board of Directors shall allot sufficient resources to ensure the highest degree of professional standards in regard to staffing, general operations, and facilities. A work environment based on mutual respect, teamwork, and support of personal responsibility will be fostered.

Brief History
The Holter Museum of Art is located in Helena, the state capital of Montana. A young museum, the Holter has been in operation since 1987. The idea of opening an art museum originated with the Helena Arts Council, a nonprofit organization comprised of local citizens fostering the visual arts in the community since 1972. After eight years of developing plans for a museum, they purchased and renovated a light industrial building. This building is located one block off the main street in the downtown area. In 1992 the Helena Arts Council transferred governance and ownership of the Museum facility to a newly incorporated and independent entity, the Holter Museum of Art, Inc., and its Board of Directors. In February 2002, the Holter successfully raised over $2,100,000 for capital improvements and opened a 6,500 square foot addition. Museum operations are currently run by four full-time and five part-time staff members.

The 17,000 sq. ft. facility is considered to be one of the finest in the state with five exhibition galleries, an Education Center, and a Collections and Research Center. The exhibition, collections and education programs have been the primary focus of the Museum's operations, with a commitment to show a wide range of mediums, content, and aesthetic sensibilities. The annual exhibit schedule has been considered to appeal to the museum's broad and diverse constituency. Artwork shown ranges from historical to modern to contemporary. The primary focus has been on contemporary art with twelve exhibitions presented annually. In addition to the galleries, our museum shop is a regional showcase for fine art and crafts that also includes a gallery for local artists.

Educational programming is both museum and community centered. Programs range from intellectual investigation to hands-on exploration for museum visitors of all ages. Lectures, slide presentations, tours, published brochures, catalogues, and wall text enhance visitors' experiences. Workshops, artist residencies, community collaborations, and school programs help the museum meet and reach new audiences and promote creative, quality arts experiences for students of all ages. Since its inception in 1987, annual revenues have grown from $74,000 to $385,000.

In fifteen years, the Holter has been able to garner increasing support through memberships, earned income, grants, contributions, donor enthusiasm, and widespread community participation!
Collection Plan

Statement of Collecting Strategy

The primary mission of the collection is the preservation of significant aspects of Montana's contemporary cultural and artistic heritage, beginning with the birth of Montana's Modernism. The collection seeks to embrace the highest quality works by regional artists. The collection augments the museum's ability for advocacy of the arts by providing a record of modernist and contemporary artistic endeavor and making these works accessible to the public. The Holter Museum seeks to add to the scholarship of this region through use of the collection for research and publication as well as the formulation of traveling exhibitions. The Holter Museum of Art strives to preserve and protect this collection by providing the best facilities and resources for its maintenance, adhering to accepted professional standards of storage, handling and exhibition, and providing quality professional conservation to ensure the continuity of the collection.

Museum Collection

The Museum houses a small but growing permanent collection, currently consisting of 1,157 works. This includes paintings, drawings, prints, glass, sculpture and ceramics. Progress of the museum and growth of the permanent collection are maintained through adherence to a newly-revised strategic plan that identifies organizational focus, collection priorities and conservation needs. The goals of the museum are obtained in part through the growth and maintenance of its collection. With the recent building expansion the Holter has experienced an upgrade of facilities resulting in a secure climate controlled vault with 735 square feet to properly house the collection and an additional 555 square feet devoted to a collection and research center. The museum has undergone MAP I, MAP II and MAP III assessments, a CAP survey and is seeking accreditation through the AAM this year, all in the interest of providing the best resources to ensure the growth and continuation of this significant holding and to uphold professional standards. As a resource that augments exhibitions and the museum's active education programs, it serves the people of this region by providing an active art historical context. Works in the collection have been traveled in statewide and regional exhibitions, making it available to a much larger constituency.

Recent donations have expanded the collection enormously. In 1998, Peter Melay, a founding member of the Archie Bray Foundation and an early arts advocate, donated a collection of 102 pieces of his ceramics created over the course of thirty years. Such an important gift is evident of the unique relationship that the museum maintains with the nearby Archie Bray Foundation for Ceramic Arts, an internationally recognized artist residency program.

The Holter has also been fortunate enough to be the recipient of grant funds from the Meadowlark Fund, initiated by Billings arts patron Miriam Sample. Funds from this grant were used to acquire work from the exhibition The Image of the Horse: Works on Paper and 17 paintings, prints, drawings and a single ceramic plate from Rudy Autio: Works on Paper. Her generosity includes many personal donations of contemporary Montana artists, including the ambitious collaboration Indian Flats by Sara Mast and Terry Kardon, Crabapple Ridge, a large outdoor sculpture by Clarice Dreyer, and most recently, Sweet Pine, an aquatint etching by scale outdoor sculpture by Clarice Dreyer, and most recently, Sweet Pine, an aquatint etching by

The museum has also been the fortunate recipient of important gifts from the exhibiting artists, including Richard Buswell, Carolyn Krieg and Barbara Van Cleeve. One of the single largest donations received was the legacy of artist and educator Robert DeWeese. As a result of his recent passing, the Holter was gifted over a thousand paintings and prints, collages and constructions that provide insight into the first moments that Modernism was introduced to Montana. His selfless devotion to teaching the principles of modern art are evident in his rich and varied approach to artistic creation. Additionally, the Holter Museum has invested in the future of the collection by building a Collection Conservation Endowment for maintenance and conservation.
The collection is governed by the Museum Board of Directors. A Collection Committee comprised of the Museum Board members, along with the Executive Director, Registrar and community members, have been delegated the responsibility and authority to oversee the collection. They meet quarterly to assess collection policies and procedures to help ensure that the highest professional standards are being implemented. Issues of new donations, collection priorities, storage, preventative and active conservation, exhibition and educational research are discussed to maximize the potential of the collection. This body is guided by the policies and procedures found hereafter.

**Collections Policy**

1. **CRITERIA**

   A. ONLY OBJECTS OF ART, PAINTING, SCULPTURE, DRAWINGS, PRINTS OR OTHER ITEMS THAT ARE MUSEUM QUALITY, ORIGINAL WORKS OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE WILL BE CONSIDERED BY THE HOLTER MUSEUM OF ART FOR THE PERMANENT COLLECTION. OBJECTS THAT DO NOT FIT THIS CRITERIA MAY BE CONSIDERED BY THE HOLTER MUSEUM FOR INCLUSION IN THE EDUCATION COLLECTION, WITH THE UNDERSTANDING ON THE DONOR’S PART THAT THE OBJECT MAY BE HELD FOR STUDY OR MAY BE SOLD FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE MUSEUM’S PERMANENT COLLECTION.

   1. IF THE ARTWORK IS DEEMED AN “EDUCATIONAL ACQUISITION” THEN IT SHALL BE UNDERSTOOD BY THE DONOR, VIA A LETTER OF AGREEMENT, THAT, AT ANY TIME, THE PIECE DONATED MAY BE USED IN A MANNER THAT WOULD BENEFIT THE HOLTER, I.E., EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS, OUTREACH OR SALE BY AUCTION.

   2. IF THE ARTWORK IS DEEMED A “PERMANENT COLLECTION ACQUISITION” THEN IT SHALL BE UNDERSTOOD BY THE DONOR, VIA A LETTER OF AGREEMENT, THAT THE PIECE DONATED WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE PERMANENT COLLECTION, BUT THAT FINAL DISPOSITION OF THE OBJECT SHALL RESIDE WITH THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

   B. OBJECTS ACCEPTED INTO THE COLLECTION MUST BE ECONOMICALLY FEASIBLE, IN GOOD CONDITION AND REPAIR OR ECONOMICALLY REPAIRABLE OR RESTORABLE.

   C. ONLY THOSE OBJECT(S) THAT MEET THIS CRITERIA WILL BE ACCEPTED INTO THE PERMANENT COLLECTION.

   D. ALL ACCESSIONS WILL BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HOLTER MUSEUM OF ART AND EVERY EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO ASSURE THEIR PROPER CARE AND STORAGE.

   E. ANY OBJECT STORED AT THE HOLTER THAT IS NOT, THROUGH CONTRACT, PROPERTY OF THE HOLTER MUSEUM SHALL FALL UNDER THE LOANS STIPULATIONS.
2. PERMANENT COLLECTION METHODS AND PROCEDURES

A. ACCESSIONS

1. THOSE OBJECTS DEEMED NECESSARY TO THE PERMANENT COLLECTION WILL BE REVIEWED BY THE COLLECTION COMMITTEE AND THE DIRECTOR OF THE HOLTER MUSEUM OF ART AND WILL BE RECOMMENDED BY THIS GROUP FOR ACCESSIONING TO THE HOLTER MUSEUM OF ART.

2. THE OBJECT(S) SHALL BE DONATED WITH ALL RIGHTS GIFTED TO THE HOLTER MUSEUM OF ART.

3. FINAL DISPOSITION OF ALL OBJECTS SHALL RESIDE WITH THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE HOLTER MUSEUM OF ART.

B. ACCESSION PROCEDURES

1. ACQUISITIONS SHOULD BE CATALOGED USING AN ART OBJECTS FORM. THIS FORM SHOULD BE PRINTED OUT IN TRIPlicate WHILE RETAINING ONE DIGITAL COPY IN THE COLLECTIONS FILE AS A MASTER: ONE COPY IN AN ALPHABETICAL DONOR FILE, ONE IN THE CENTRAL HOLTER MUSEUM OF ART OBJECTS FILE AND ONE IN A NUMERICAL FILE.

2. A PERMANENT ACQUISITION NUMBER WILL BE AFFIXED TO THE OBJECT OR LETTERED ON IT IN A DISCRETE BUT APPROPRIATE LOCATION. INDIA INK OR A SIMILAR PERMANENT LETTERING MATERIAL SHOULD BE USED. THE SAME ACQUISITION NUMBERS WILL BE USED ON THE CATALOG FORM AND THE RECEIPT FORM.

3. RECEIPTS FOR EACH ITEM SHALL BE EXECUTED AT THE TIME AN OBJECT IS RECEIVED. TWO COPIES WILL BE MADE: ONE FOR THE ALPHABETICAL DONOR FILE AND ONE FOR THE DONOR.

4. ALL OBJECTS DONATED OR ON LOAN TO THE HOLTER MUSEUM OF ART SHALL BE APPRAISED. MUSEUM STAFF WILL PROVIDE APPROPRIATE ACCESS FOR APPRAISALS. HOLTER MUSEUM OF ART STAFF MEMBERS OR MEMBERS OF THE BOARD WILL NOT PROVIDE COLLECTION DONORS WITH MONETARY APPRAISALS FOR ITEMS. APPRAISALS OR VALUATION OF OBJECTS FOR TAX DEDUCTION PURPOSES ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DONOR.
5. GIFTS SHALL BE HANDLED IN ACCORDANCE WITH IRS PROCEDURES. THIS SHALL BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE OWNER.

C. DE-ACCESSIONING PROCEDURES

1. ANY OBJECT THAT HAS BEEN ACCESSIONED SHALL REMAIN THE PROPERTY OF THE HOLTER MUSEUM OF ART UNTIL SUCH TIME IT IS DETERMINED TO BE NO LONGER OF USE TO THE MISSION OR THE PURPOSES OF THE MUSEUM OR ITS PERMANENT COLLECTION. IN THIS EVENT, THE OBJECT MUST BE DECLARED SURPLUS AND IT CAN BE CONSIDERED FOR DE-ACCESSION.

2. THE PROCEDURES FOLLOWED FOR ACCEPTING ITEMS INTO THE PERMANENT COLLECTION SHOULD ALSO BE FOLLOWED FOR DE-ACCESSIONING. THE ITEM(S) SHALL BE REVIEWED AND RECOMMENDED FOR DE-ACCESSIONING BY THE COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE. DE-ACCESSIONING (REMOVAL) FROM THE PERMANENT COLLECTION MUST BE APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE HOLTER MUSEUM OF ART.

3. OBJECTS DECLARED SURPLUS AND ELIGIBLE FOR DE-ACCESSIONING SHALL BE DISPOSED OF FOR MONETARY GAIN OR BE TRADED FOR MORE DESIRABLE ACQUISITIONS. NET PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE OF DE-ACCESSIONED OBJECTS FROM THE PERMANENT COLLECTION MAY NOT BE USED FOR GENERAL OPERATION COSTS OF THE MUSEUM, BUT ARE RESTRICTED TO USE WITHIN THE PERMANENT COLLECTION, ITS GROWTH OR PRESERVATION. PURCHASE OF NEW WORKS OF ART FOR THE PERMANENT COLLECTION MUST BE APPROVED BY THE COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

4. NO STAFF MEMBER, MEMBER OF THE BOARD OR RELATIVE OF EITHER MAY ACQUIRE DE-ACCESSIONED OBJECTS FROM THE PERMANENT COLLECTION EXCEPT WHEN THE OBJECT AND ITS SOURCE HAVE BEEN ADVERTISED, ITS FULL HISTORY MADE AVAILABLE, AND IT IS SOLD AT PUBLIC AUCTION OR CLEARLY OFFERED FOR SALE IN THE PUBLIC MARKETPLACE. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL OWNERSHIP OF AN OBJECT IN THE PERMANENT COLLECTION BE TRANSFERRED TO A MUSEUM STAFF MEMBER, MEMBER OF THE BOARD OR A RELATIVE. NO STAFF MEMBER OR MEMBER OF THE BOARD MAY GAIN FINANCIALLY BY INFORMATION GAINED THROUGH THEIR ASSOCIATION WITH THE MUSEUM, UNLESS THAT INFORMATION BE ANNOUNCED AND MADE AVAILABLE TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC. OBJECTS MUST NOT BE PURCHASED BY MUSEUM STAFF OR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ON A PRIVATE BASIS IF A
3. COLLECTIONS CARE

IN KEEPING WITH PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS, THE HOLTER MUSEUM OF ART SEEKS TO PROVIDE THE HIGHEST QUALITY OF STORAGE, EXHIBITION, CONSERVATION, AND RESEARCH FACILITIES RELATED TO THE MAINTENANCE AND USE OF THE COLLECTION. STANDARDS OF LIGHTING, CLIMATE CONTROL, SECURITY, PEST AND DISASTER MITIGATION, PROPER HANDLING METHODS AND COLLECTION SURVEYS ARE ADHERED TO AND IMPROVED UPON THROUGH CONTINUED STAFF TRAINING, CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS, FACILITY UPGRADE AND EXPANSION.

1. COLLECTIONS IN THE MUSEUM'S CUSTODY SUPPORT THE MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS AND THE MUSEUM'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE PUBLIC TRUST.

2. COLLECTIONS IN THE MUSEUM'S CUSTODY ARE PROTECTED, PRESERVED, SECURED AND CARED FOR TO THE HIGHEST DEGREE OF PROFESSIONALISM.

3. COLLECTIONS IN THE MUSEUM'S CARE ARE DOCUMENTED AND ACCOUNTED FOR.

4. COLLECTION ACTIVITIES (ACQUISITION, DE-ACCESSION, LOANS) ARE CONDUCTED IN A MANNER THAT RESPECTS THE PRESERVATION OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES, AND STAND IN CONFORMITY TO THE MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS OF THE MUSEUM.

5. COLLECTIONS RELATED ACTIVITY PROMOTES THE PUBLIC GOOD RATHER THAN INDIVIDUAL FINANCIAL GAIN.

A. ACCESS POLICY

1. ACCESS TO THE PERMANENT COLLECTION IS LIMITED TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, REGISTRAR AND PREPARATOR (FOR MAINTENANCE) AND IS CONTROLLED THROUGH THE ACCOUNTABILITY OF A LIMITED NUMBER OF KEYS ASSIGNED TO A KEY LOG.

2. PERMISSION TO OBTAIN PHYSICAL ACCESS TO THE COLLECTION CAN BE GRANTED OR DENIED SOLELY BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. ACCESS TO COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL OR COLLECTION RELATED MATERIAL MUST BE SUBMITTED AS A WRITTEN REQUEST TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND MAY BE SUBJECT TO A FEE DETERMINED ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS.
3. CARE MUST BE TAKEN TO ABIDE BY AND RESPECT COPYRIGHT LAWS, BOTH THOSE MAINTAINED BY THE MUSEUM AND ALSO THE ARTISTS IT REPRESENTS. ANY REPRODUCTIONS MADE OF ARTWORK IN THE CARE OF THE MUSEUM WILL BE DONE WITH FULL CONSENT OF THE ARTIST OR THE OWNER. EACH REPRODUCTION SHOULD HAVE AN INDELIBLE STAMP MARKED ON ITS BODY TO PREVENT CONFUSION REGARDING AUTHENTICITY, ALONG WITH AN OFFICIAL CERTIFICATE THAT DESCRIBES ITS MAKE AND EDITION IN CLEAR TERMS TO CLARIFY COPYRIGHT OWNERSHIP.

B. INVENTORY

1. INVENTORIES ALLOW AN OPPORTUNITY TO VERIFY AND UPDATE INFORMATION, A BASIS FOR PLANNING STORAGE, CONSERVATION AND BUDGET NEEDS, ESTABLISHING A RECORD FOR SECURITY OR DISASTER CONCERNS, AN AID TO RESEARCH AND A MEANS OF COLLECTION MANAGEMENT.

2. A COMPLETE INVENTORY SHALL BE UNDERTAKEN ANNUALLY, OR AS DEEMED NECESSARY BY THE REGISTRAR. EVERY OBJECT WILL BE EXAMINED AND ACCOUNTED FOR, CHECKED AGAINST A LOCATION CARD BEARING ITEM INFORMATION AND AN ACCESSION LIST TO DETERMINE THAT BOTH RECORDS AND OBJECTS ARE INTACT. ITEMS ON LOAN WILL BE REVIEWED, AS WELL AS THOSE ON EXHIBITION.

3. SECTIONAL INVENTORY WILL FOLLOW THE PROCEDURES OF THE COMPLETE INVENTORY, BUT REMAIN LIMITED TO ONE PORTION OF THE COLLECTION, ORGANIZED BY LOGICAL CATEGORY AND PERFORMED QUARTERLY, OR AS NECESSARY. IT SHALL BE SCHEDULED ON A ROTATING BASIS SO THAT ALL AREAS OF THE COLLECTION ARE EXAMINED DURING ONE CYCLE.

4. SPOT INVENTORIES SHALL BE PERFORMED AS NECESSARY ON A REGULAR BASIS TO ASSERTAIN THE ACCURACY OF RECORDS AND LOCATION BY EXAMINING A SMALL, RANDOM SELECTION AS A REPRESENTATIVE PORTION OF THE ENTIRE COLLECTION.

5. UPON COMPLETION, RECORDS OF THE INVENTORY WILL BE KEPT TO DETERMINE AND SCHEDULE THE SUBSEQUENT INVENTORIES.

6. IN EVENT THAT AN INVENTORY DETECTS A MISSING OR OUT OF PLACE OBJECT, THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR WILL BE
IMMEDIATELY NOTIFIED, A COMPLETE INVENTORY WILL BE
PERFORMED, SECURITY MEASURES WILL BE REVIEWED, AND
AN INTERNAL INVESTIGATION WILL BE UNDERTAKEN. IF
NECESSARY, LOCAL POLICE WILL BE NOTIFIED.

C. INSURANCE

1. THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ALONG WITH THE
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT MAINTAINS THE MUSEUM’S
INSURANCE POLICY. THE MUSEUM IS INSURED BY A
COMPREHENSIVE POLICY THAT PROTECTS BUILDING AND
CONTENTS INCLUDING OBJECTS IN TRANSIT UNDER THE
MUSEUM’S CARE. THE POLICY IS CARRIED LOCALLY BY
MONTANA INTERNATIONAL INSURANCE REPRESENTING ST.
PAUL FIRE AND MARINE. BEYOND THIS, A GENERAL
LIABILITY FINE ARTS POLICY ADDRESSES SPECIFIC DAMAGE
AND LOSS. THIS POLICY IS CARRIED BY HUNTINGTON T.
BLOCK REPRESENTING ACE FIRE UNDERWRITERS
INSURANCE CO. DEVIATIONS FROM THE GENERAL
INSURANCE POLICIES MAY BE APPROVED BY THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.

2. IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT, IT IS STRONGLY
ENCOURAGED THAT ANY INVOLVED PARTIES SEEK
COMPENSATION FROM THEIR PERSONAL INSURANCE
(HOMEOWNERS OR OTHER) DUE TO THE MUSEUM’S $500/ PER
INSTANCE DEDUCTIBLE.

3. THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR THE CARE AND PROTECTION
OF THE COLLECTION THROUGH SAFE HANDLING
PROCEDURES, PROPER PACKING, PREVENTATIVE AND
ACTIVE CONSERVATION, AND DISASTER MITIGATION.
HOWEVER, THE COLLECTION IS NOT INSURED TO FULL
VALUE DUE TO LIMITED FUNDS. THE ROLE OF INSURANCE
IN THIS CASE IS TO AUGMENT NATURAL PRECAUTION AND
TO COMPENSATE FOR INEVITABLE UNFORESEEN DISASTER.

4. RECORDS OF INSURANCE ARE MAINTAINED BY THE
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT. ANY ALTERATIONS TO THE
INSURANCE POLICY NEED TO BE APPROVED BY THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.

D. LOANS

1. NO OBJECT OF ART SHALL BE TAKEN ON A LOAN BASIS
UNLESS THE DONOR (OWNER) ASSUMES ALL COSTS FOR THE
LENGTH OF THE LOAN. ASSUMPTION OF INSURANCE,
LIABILITY AND STORAGE COSTS SHALL BE THE DONOR
(OWNER’S) RESPONSIBILITY.
2. OBJECTS SHALL NOT BE ACCEPTED FOR LOAN FOR A PERIOD LONGER THAN ONE YEAR. ON JANUARY 15TH OF EACH YEAR THE HOLTER WILL CONTACT THE DONOR AND, FROM THAT POINT ON, RENEWAL OF THE AGREEMENT SHALL BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DONOR (OWNER) WITH ALL COSTS, INCLUDING RETURN SHIPPING IF THE PIECE IS NOT APPROPRIATELY RENEWED, COSTS AGAIN COVERED BY THE DONOR.

3. ACCEPTANCE OF OBJECTS ON LOAN WILL BE DONE USING THE SAME PROCEDURES AS FOR ACCESSIONING ITEMS INTO THE PERMANENT COLLECTION. THE ITEMS MUST BE REVIEWED BY THE PERMANENT COLLECTION COMMITTEE AND THE DIRECTOR. RECOMMENDATION WILL THEN BE MADE TO THE HOLTER MUSEUM OF ART BOARD OF DIRECTORS WHO MUST APPROVE THE LOAN. THE HMA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MAY ALSO DETERMINE ANY ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS OF THE LOAN AS NECESSARY.

4. OUTGOING LOAN ASSUMPTION OF INSURANCE, LIABILITY AND STORAGE COSTS SHALL BE THE BORROWING INSTITUTION'S RESPONSIBILITY.

5. INCOMING LOANS FOR EXHIBITION ARE INSURED BY THE HOLTER DURING THEIR STAY AND EXTENDING TO COVER RETURN SHIPPING. THE HOLTER'S INSURANCE DOES NOT EXTEND TO COVER WORKS SHIPPED TO THE HOLTER, UNLESS SO STATED, AS IT CANNOT ACCOUNT THAT PROPER HANDLING AND PACKING PROCEDURES WERE FOLLOWED, AND WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY LOSS.


4. PERSONNEL

A. IT IS THE DUTY OF ALL MEMBERS OF THE HOLTER STAFF AND THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE COLLECTION. CONSERVATION NEEDS, PROPER ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITION, DISASTER MITIGATION, AND SECURITY ARE ALL MEANS OF SAFEGUARDING THE COLLECTION, AND WHILE SPECIFIC DUTIES CONCERNING COLLECTION CARE FALL TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND REGISTRAR, ALL PERSONNEL MUST BE ACTIVELY INVOLVED AND AWARE TO PROVIDE THE BEST STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE IN MAINTAINING THE COLLECTION.

B. REGISTRATION

1. IT WILL BE AMONG THE DUTIES OF THE REGISTRAR OR
PERSON DESIGNATE TO EXECUTE ALL RECEIPTS AND ACQUISITION MATERIALS PARTICULAR TO THE HOLTER MUSEUM OF ART. ALL PHASES OF ACCESSIONING AFTER THE DIRECTOR’S INITIAL CONTACTS AND NECESSARY NEGOTIATIONS SHALL BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE REGISTRAR.

2. AUTHORITY TO MOVE OBJECTS IN THE PERMANENT COLLECTION LIES WITH THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OR REGISTRAR. THE REGISTRAR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR A WRITTEN RECORD OF MOVEMENT THAT ACCOMPANIES EACH MOVE FROM AN ASSIGNED EXHIBITION OR STORAGE POSITION. ADDITIONALLY, THE REGISTRAR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SAFE MOVEMENT OF OBJECTS AND ALL PROPER SHIPPING, PACKING AND HANDLING INVOLVED, OR THE SUPERVISION OF SUCH PROCEDURE.

3. THE REGISTRAR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL FILES PERTAINING TO THE COLLECTION (SEE ACCESSION SECTION) AND SHALL MAINTAIN THEM AT THE DISCRETION OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE HOLTER MUSEUM OF ART.

4. RECORDS SHOULD RELATE TO OBJECTS THROUGH THE AFOREMENTIONED ACCESSION NUMBER AND PROVIDE EVIDENCE OF LEGAL OWNERSHIP, PRIOR HISTORY, AND ALL ACTIVITY ( Loan, exhibition, conservation, deaccession, location, etc...)

5. DUPLICATE COPIES SHOULD BE MAINTAINED BY THE REGISTRAR AND STORED OUTSIDE OF THE MUSEUM.

C. PROCEDURAL CHANGES WILL BE MADE ONLY WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR WITH GUIDANCE FROM THE COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

5. ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

A. GOVERNANCE

1. THE GOVERNING AUTHORITY ENSURES THAT ALL BODIES WORKING ON BEHALF OF THE MUSEUM UNDERSTAND AND SUPPORT THE MISSION AND VISION OF THE HOLTER AND ITS RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE PUBLIC TRUST.

2. ITS MEMBERS UNDERSTAND AND FULFILL THEIR TRUSTEESHIP AND ACT CORPORATELY, NOT INDIVIDUALLY.

3. THE MUSEUM’S INTERESTS, FINANCIAL, HUMAN, PHYSICAL, COLLECTIONS AND PROGRAMS, ARE PROTECTED, MAINTAINED AND DEVELOPED IN SUPPORT OF THE MUSEUM’S MISSION.

4. THE MUSEUM IS RESPONSIVE TO AND REPRESENTS THE
5. It maintains a relationship with staff in which shared roles are recognized and separate responsibilities are respected.
6. Working relationships among the board of directors, staff and volunteers are based in equity and mutual respect.
7. Professional standards and practices inform and guide the museum operations.
8. Policies are articulated and prudent oversight is practiced.

B. Ethical Considerations

1. The Holter Museum of Art adheres to the principles of the UNESCO draft treaty on illicit export, import and transfer of cultural property.
2. Conflict of interest is unethical and punishable by law in the United States. Museum staff and members of the board must be mindful to avoid these associations.
3. Employees of the Holter Museum of Art and its board of directors may not accept gifts of any significant value from affiliates that have a professional relationship with the museum.

Long Range Conservation Plan
Collection care and conservation are the Holter Museum of Art's highest priorities and relate directly to fulfilling the Museum's Mission and Vision Statements.

Goals
The Long Range Conservation Plan contains three areas of concentration:
1) Implementation of Long Term Goals
2) Regular Annual Procedures
3) Identification and Implementation of Special Projects

Implementation of Long Term Goals
1) Adequately house the Permanent Collection by obtaining and installing a painting storage rack system, 2) Complete lighting upgrade recommended in 2000 CAP survey, 3) Add a new position to Collections Management, 4) The Holter Museum of Art endeavors to complete, a) Staff evaluations of each collection category, b) Surveys of the collection areas by conservators, c) recommendations of treatment, stabilization, exhibition and storage requirements, and d) implementation of conservator's recommendations on a continual basis.

Implementation of Regular Annual Procedures
1) Develop and implement an Integrated Pest Management Policy, 2) Develop and implement a Disaster management Plan, 3) Examine and register recent acquisitions,
a) Remove damaging or acidic materials from art objects, b) create an Art Object Worksheet and Condition Report for each acquisition 3) Spot inventories and comprehensive inventories, 4) Monitor special objects, 5) Survey recent acquisitions and identify those that may need a conservation survey or further monitoring, 6) Carry out conservation on individual pieces

**Procedure**

The Holter Museum of Art mandates that all treatments be appropriate to the piece, reversible and consistent with the artist's intention regarding the aesthetic and conception of the art work, and accepted standard consistent with conservation practices.

Conservation of the Permanent Collection of the Holter Museum of Art shall be contracted out to professional conservators. Decisions pertaining to conservation will be made by the Executive Director, the Curator of Exhibitions and Collections and the Collections Committee. The conservation needs of each object will be considered individually by a conservator. The priority in conservation will be stabilization and preservation of the object. Condition and materials of construction will be documented in writing and objects will be photographed prior to treatment. A signed contract of treatment proposal will be required for each object prior to treatment.

**Preventative Conservation**

Environment, maintenance and storage for the permanent collection are other important components of the Museum's long-range plan. The Holter's permanent collection is housed in a climate-controlled, windowless, locked vault that was designed specifically for this purpose when the museum recently expanded. Access is limited to the curatorial staff. Light levels are kept within the recommended range, and storage in the vault is regulated to absolute darkness when not in use. Art storage conditions were upgraded during expansion and renovation completed in 2001. At that time, an HVAC system that controls Museum temperature and humidity, as well as a lighting system in the new galleries that is flexible enough to meet foot-candle requirements, were installed. In addition, a 2003 IMLS Conservation Project Grant provided new storage cabinets for works on paper and the ceramics collection, archival conservation supplies, and training by a conservator about the collection and new equipment. The Museum has adopted guidelines for proper handling procedures that are reviewed with everyone who comes in contact with the collection. The museum has undergone MAP I, MAP II and MAP III assessments and a Conservation Assessment Program survey in 2000, all with the intention of providing the best facilities possible. In the event of a fire or break-in, our alarm system is connected with local law enforcement officials, with a response time of three minutes. All exhibition galleries are climate controlled as well.

**Conservation Priorities**

At this time, works that are in need of conservation attention are listed hereafter. This list is non-sequential and prioritization is contingent upon conservation recommendations to be made by a professional as outlined in treatment proposals.

1. **Robert DeWeese Collection.** Many of the works in the DeWeese collection should be examined on the basis of DeWeese's unorthodox materials use and the poor handling and storage of the work before it came into the Museum’s care.
Specific items in need are listed below.

2. Tie with a Collar, 1985, Mixed Media Construction, 13½ x 7 x 2½ in.
3. Small Blue Painting, 1952, Oil on Canvas, 19½ x 23 in.
4. Homage to Jessie, not dated, Mixed Media, 31 x 19 x 6 in.
5. Real Tie on Silver Ground, not dated, Mixed Media, 13 x 27 in.
6. Tying 4 in Hand, not dated, Mixed Media, 17½ x 14½ in.
7. Feeding the Multitudes, 1971, Mixed Media on Canvas, 49 x 49 in.

2. Gennie DeWeese, Landscape with Yellow Sky, 1972, Oil on Panel, 36 x 48 in.
4. Peter Voulkos, Fried Egg Plate, 1958, Stoneware, 13 5/8 diameter
5. Jay Rummel, Untitled (plate), c. 1960-76, Stoneware, 21 ½ inches diameter
6. Peter Meloy, Untitled (plate), n.d, Stoneware, 14 7/16 inches diameter

Collection Goals for Acquisitions

1) Willem Volkerz

2) Former Bray Directors- David Shaner, Ken Fergusen, Dave Cornell, Kurt Weiser, David Shaner, Carol Roorbach, Josh DeWeese

3) Doug Turman/ Rick Newby Collaboration: Sobering Moments in Montana History; Actual Events, Genuine Characters Suite

4) Dale Livezey-

5) Anne Appleby- Painting

6) Wes Mills-

7) Nan Parsons

8) Bill Stockton

9) Jerry Rankin- Early Modernists

10) John Smart- photogrpahs
# Appendix B

## Art Object Worksheet

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Works Cited


