

## **MUSEUM LONDON**

### **BOARD POLICY**

#### ***CONSERVATION***

##### **Preamble**

The basis of Museum London's existence is its collections; hence, their conservation must be of the highest priority within the activities of the Museum. Art and artifacts are entrusted to Museum London with the understanding that they will be available to future generations in optimum condition. It is the responsibility of the Executive Director to ensure that the art and artifacts are housed, cared for, exhibited and interpreted in the safest possible way. There are two functions of conservation: 3

- Preventive conservation: action taken to maintain the condition of artifacts and to protect them from harm.
- Conservation treatment: action taken to remedy previously caused damage.

Accepted standards of practice for accredited conservators in Canada will be followed as a guide in the handling and treatment of all art and artifacts.

##### **Policy**

###### ***Preventive Conservation Practices***

###### **Environment**

Museum London will strive to provide the best environmental conditions within its control for the preservation of the collections, in storage, on exhibit and in work areas. Environmental conditions of relative humidity, light, temperature and air cleanliness will be maintained to meet accepted museum standards set by the Canadian Museums Association. Environmental conditions will be monitored by City of London Facilities as well as Museum London staff assigned to conservation duties and the Executive Director and Head of Collections and Exhibitions will be notified of deviations from the acceptable ranges.

###### **Loss and Damage**

Museum London will protect the collections from loss or damage through fire, water, theft, vandalism, accidents, insects and vermin in compliance with the *Physical Plant Policy* and the *Emergency and Disaster Planning Policy*. All staff will be familiar with emergency procedures relating to the aforementioned problems that are described in the *Emergency Response Plan*.

###### **Storage**

Museum London will provide secure storage areas sufficient and appropriate to house existing collections. Access is determined by the Executive Director or designate. Physical access will be ensured both for maintenance and study. Storage areas will not be used to house anything other than art and artifacts.

### **Security**

Museum London will provide sufficient and appropriate security to safeguard existing collections, while on exhibition and in storage.

### **Exhibition**

Museum London will ensure that art and artifacts from the collection and on loan to the Museum are exhibited in a safe and secure manner appropriate to their form, materials, function, and artist-designated interactivity.

### **Handling**

Museum London will ensure that all staff members involved in the care and handling of art and artifacts have been properly trained. Preventive conservation procedures will be outlined in the Emergency Response Plan, which will be available to all staff. Proper equipment will be available to safely move and store objects as required.

### **Documentation**

As part of the ongoing documentation, Museum London will regularly monitor and record the condition of art, artifacts and the building, with the aim of minimizing the need for conservation treatment.

### **Loans**

Museum London will ensure that all out-going loans will be protected from damage in transit and provided with environmental conditions at the borrowing institution that are satisfactory to the Museum. Incoming loans will be afforded the same protection as Museum London's collections, will be fully insured under Museum London's fine arts insurance policy and in accordance with any specifications outlined in the loan agreement.

### **Responsibility**

Preventive conservation practices are the responsibility of all staff.

### ***Conservation Treatment Practices***

#### **Priority**

Museum London will strive to employ preventive conservation methods as the primary approach, on the understanding that the least amount of intervention necessary in the treatment of an object is desirable. Active conservation treatment is undertaken when preventive methods are not effective.

In accordance with the availability of resources, priority for attention will be given to art and artifacts in the following categories (in descending order):

- Those objects requiring emergency treatment or stabilization.
- Those objects required for exhibition.
- Those objects required for outgoing loans.
- Those objects of particular historic or artistic significance.
- All other objects in Museum London's collection.

### **Responsibility**

Collections staff and an accredited conservator together will determine conservation treatment to be undertaken. Only an accredited conservator may carry out conservation treatment. The conservator may designate museum staff at his/her discretion to perform specific treatment, which will be carried out under his/her supervision on a per treatment basis.

### **Extent of Treatment**

The extent of treatment will be decided by the Executive Director or designate, together with the appropriate collections staff and an accredited conservator, based on considerations of the ultimate use of the art object or artifact, its state of preservation and its duplication within the collection. Also considered will be maintenance of the historic integrity of the object and the principles of minimal and reversible intervention as governed by applicable standards of practice.

### **Documentation**

Appropriate documentation of any conservation treatment performed on an art object or artifact will be recorded and kept in both text and visual format.

### **Conservation Training and Information**

Museum London will provide ongoing training and information regarding preventive conservation for staff, volunteers and the general public.

**Last Revised Date:** 29 August 2018

### **MONITORING:**

#### **Adherence**

The Executive Director will report to the Board on any areas of non-compliance within a timely manner.

#### **Policy Review**

*Method:* Internal Report

*Responsibility:* Policy Committee

*Minimum Frequency:* Four Years