

Art

Collecting policy

User profile

This collection statement covers provision for the Fine Art Department. Other departments with an interest in art include: Film, Theatre & Television, Philosophy, Typography and Graphic Communication, History and the Institute of Education.

The collections serve all staff and students in Art and students in the Institute of Education teaching art.

Research Interests

Research within the department is organised across practice-led, theoretical and art historical modes of enquiry, migrating between three themes:

- Exhibition and Publics
- Art, Power, Politics
- Performance, Publication, Text

Key research areas for Fine Art are:

- Curation and participatory practice
- Performance and publication projects

The specific research interests of academic staff include:

- All aspects of contemporary art practice and theory
- Post-structuralist theory, continental philosophy and recent art criticism
- Text-based practice
- New media, video art, time-based media
- Digital culture
- Artistic conceptions of work
- Functions of the artists' image after modernism
- Cultural production
- Artists' collectives
- Economy and culture
- Art education
- Reception of artworks
- Photography and its subjective experience of a place
- Contemporary sculpture

Dimensions of teaching and learning

The department runs full and part-time degree programmes. Art can also be studied as part of a joint honours undergraduate course in combination with other subjects including Philosophy, Psychology, English Literature and Film & Theatre.

A list of programmes offered within the department can be found at:
www.reading.ac.uk/fineart/

External users: college of art students; local sixth formers.

Related subject areas:

- Aesthetics (Philosophy)
- Architecture and landscape design (Real Estate and Planning; and Construction Management)
- Classical art and architecture (Classics and Archaeology)
- Continental philosophy
- Graphic design (Typography and Graphic Communication)
- Film, theatre and television (Film, theatre and television)

The Institute of Education also makes purchases on the subject of art.

Current holdings

Most materials fall into the 700 section of the classification, but some additional material is found in the 111 Aesthetics section, 194 Philosophy section and 900 History section. For more detail see the Art *Finding your way* guide.

Books and ebooks

There is a large selection of books in the relevant sections, and this material rarely becomes outdated. There are standing orders in place for publications from Book Works and other key publishers, as well as exhibition catalogues from Tate Modern and the Whitechapel's Documents of Contemporary Art series.

Alternative or additional electronic access to monographs is provided through ACLS Humanities Ebooks online, Cambridge Companions and Cambridge Books online, Early English Books Online (EEBO), and Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO). There are a small number of individual ebook titles relating to philosophy of art, performance and aesthetics, including those purchased via MyiLibrary and EBL.

Multimedia

There are small numbers of CD-ROMs, videos and DVDs on contemporary art, in particular on performance art, and a few relating to the history of art.

Images are available via the reference resource Oxford Art Online.

There is also access to several online databases with film, image and sound collections, including:

- Britannica Image Quest

- Visual Arts Data Service (VADS)
- MediaHub
- Screenonline

Periodicals

Art maintain several current periodical subscriptions that support teaching and learning; with some contribution from departmental funds. Significant sets of non-current titles include:

Antike Kunst vols. 1-40

The Builder (microfilm 1842-1965)

Studio: an illustrated magazine of fine and applied art (1893-1982)

There are short runs of significant early titles e.g. *Savoy* and *Graphic* (not on open shelves).

There are a number of e-journals available. JSTOR and Project Muse have philosophy and art titles and some titles such as *Frieze* are simultaneously available online.

Reference/bibliographic

The Library has about 500 volumes of reference works, an adequate resource in terms of enquiries made at the 3rd Floor Information Desk. These are supplemented by titles in the electronic reference collection e.g. Credo Reference and Oxford Reference Online.

The Grove dictionary of art is available in print and online as part of Oxford Art Online.

Access is provided to the key bibliographic citation database in the subject area, the *Bibliography of the History of Art* which covers material published between 1975 and 2007. It is possible that there is a need for access to subsequent years' data and this will be discussed and explored with the department.

A back print run is held of *Art Bibliographies Modern*.

The Library holds the *Art Institute of Chicago index to art periodicals*.

Related special collections

Gibbings Collection

This collection contains books written and/or illustrated by, or about, Robert Gibbings (1889-1958), author and wood-engraver. The collection includes books printed under his supervision at the Golden Cockerel Press at Waltham St. Lawrence, Berkshire from 1924 to 1933 or at the University of Reading School of Art from 1936 to 1941, as well as a wide range of additional primary and secondary materials.

Great Exhibition Collection

The collection includes printed books and periodicals, pamphlets and ephemera, around 50 prints and some objects, focusing on the Great Exhibition of 1851.

Coburn Collection

Books illustrated by the photographer Alvin Langdon Coburn and ephemera about him.

There are also many relevant 20th century illustrated books in various special collections.

Strengths and exclusions

Exclusions: the collection includes little material relating to arts of other cultures, crafts, and design (apart from graphic design which is purchased by Typography & Graphic Communication).

Areas of strength largely reflect the research interests of academic staff, encompassing Western European art from the middle ages to the present, and modern American art.

Recent purchases have enhanced coverage of contemporary artists' monographs, exhibition catalogues, contemporary art theory and its expanded catchment areas in philosophy and cultural theory. We have also substantially increased our holdings in artist film, video and performance in the form of DVDs. The collection of monographic and thematic DVDs on contemporary art have also been augmented.

Particular specialisms include contemporary art in all its aspects listed above.

Philosophy of art is an expanding area and is the area of much PhD research in the Fine Art section of the department.

The Institute of Education purchases in the areas of modern art, women's art, and art education.

Collecting level

Purchasing is largely at study level, books and resources relevant to taught courses and postgraduate research. Very limited purchases are made at a general level outside the subjects taught or researched.

Reference material: provision is good in its support for study, and is maintained.

Level of support for research: material is bought in support of the key research areas.

Alternative access

Inter-library loans

Requests remain relatively low compared to other departments.

Use of other libraries

Members of academic staff, MFA, MA and PhD students regularly use:

- The National Art Library at the V&A
- Tate Archives and Library
- The British Library
- The London Library

Undergraduates doing dissertations use the National Art Library and the Hyman Kreitman Research Centre at Tate Britain.

Selection, acquisition and stock editing

See the General Collection Development Statement for general principles.

Format: the Library acquires printed and electronic material, and DVDs.

Responsibility for selecting new material rests with the Department via the Library representatives who co-ordinate orders.

The Department's selection policy gives priority to post 1960s art, current contemporary art exhibition catalogues, recent art theory and philosophy. There is a strong interest in digital art. Materials acquired by the institute of Education have a focus on contemporary art and women's art.

Changes to purchasing policy may arise in response to the appointment of new staff and new specialist interests.

E-journals are preferred for contemporary art titles due to the increase in online activity by students.

There is an interest in purchasing text-based books (e.g. theory) as e-books where available, usually in addition to a print copy, but there is a strong preference for most other items to be purchased in print format due to the quality of reproduction of visual material.

Policy written by Karen Drury and Ruth Ng, Art Liaison Librarians, June 2015