Date Approved: 17th June 2020
– Theatre Collection Management Committee (TCMC)

Review Date: Annually by TC

Renewal Date: June 2025

Theatre Collection: Documentation Policy

Policy Statement

Caring for all our collections to a high standard and widening the use of them is a central concern for the Theatre Collection (TC). We recognise that in order to achieve this we require effective documentation of our holdings. This will help us ensure the security and management of our collections and enable increased access to them. As good documentation underpins such a wide range of activities, we will use resources available to us in house and also seek external support whenever appropriate in order to improve it.

Purpose

The TC Documentation Policy will ensure we:

- Improve accountability for collections by recording details of all accessions and subsequently documenting them in further detail, as appropriate.

- Strive towards best practice for all our collections information whilst maintaining (at least) minimum professional standards in documentation procedures and collection information.

- Continue to develop higher standards of documentation through a programme of enhanced documentation, such as cataloguing at collection, file and item level as appropriate.

- Extend access to collection information to the workforce and beyond, primarily via online dissemination.

- Strengthen the security of the collections through location and movement control and other documentation.

- Ensure the long-term sustainability of electronic data and other information generated by the TC about its collections through rigorous procedures, backups and the implementation of a digital asset management system.

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Context

This policy should be read in conjunction with the TC's Forward Plan, Documentation Plan, Documentation Enrichment Plan and Documentation Procedural Manual as well as the Cultural Collections Digital Preservation Policy. It will be reviewed every five years or following any major change.

General

The Theatre Collection is committed to recording sufficient information regarding its collections, in order to identify and locate items, and to back-up these records as appropriate. The TC documentation policy and plan follows museum standards including SPECTRUM, archives standards including ISAD(G) and guidance such as provided by Collections Trust, and the Digital Preservation Coalition It is committed to continuously enhancing information through a Documentation Enrichment Programme, which has a scaled approach to level and detail of documentation according to appropriateness.

The TC is bound by, and adheres to, the General Data Protection Regulation, Freedom of Information Act and any additional legislation relevant to the storage of data and information.

The TC takes the security of its information very seriously. This includes the information contained in the collections themselves as well as the information it holds about them in hard copy and digital form. Security refers to both the physical security of the information and data and its long-term preservation.

Paper documentation is stored in the Theatre Collection office, which is locked when Theatre Collection staff are absent, and in a safe in the secure TC strong rooms. The majority of paper-based documentation is also recorded electronically.

Digital Records

Digital administrative documentation for the Theatre Collection is stored on the University central filestore and backed-up and made secure by the University. This central filestore, the University's storage array is set up with an A and B end which affords continuous replication for resilience purposes. Daily snapshots are also taken of the data and held for 21 days to allow users to restore previous versions using the normal Windows interface. Copies of the data are also sent to tape with a full backup taken every 3 weeks, differentials every week and incrementals daily. These copies are held for 3 months with weekly offsite runs stored in a fireproof safe in another location. The tapes are fully encrypted at the drive level.

(All accessioned digital data that forms part of the TC's collections, is stored on the University's Research Data Storage Facility (RDSF).. This advanced 'super computer' facility has been specifically designed for the secure storage

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and retrieval of research data held in digital formats, and guarantees the data for a minimum of 20 years (in line with the requirements of research funding bodies.) and includes

Since its implementation, the TC's integrated collection management system, Calm, holds the majority of documentation regarding collections. It is stored and hosted by Axiell Ltd, the company who provide the software. Details regarding the security, maintenance and back-up of this data can be found in the Axiell Licence and support services details (W:\TheatreCollection\CALM).

The University is also currently implementing Preservica, a digital asset management system which actively preserves the digital items that form part of the Theatre Collection's collections and will provide the means of access to them. Digital items from the collections currently stored within the RDSF will be ingested to Preservica, following the documentation principles outlined in the Cultural Collections Digital Preservation Policy.

Future developments

During the period of this policy the plans for documentation include:

- Improving accessibility by sharing data more widely, for example through Discovery, Archives Hub and other portals, as appropriate.
- Continued development of Calm and CalmView to improve management of our data and increase accessibility to information about our collections
- Ensuring all collections continue to have documentation at minimum SPECTRUM standard such as accession records, numbering, labelling and marking, location and movement control, loans and exit (if appropriate) records.
- Continuing the Documentation Enrichment programme. This aims to bring documentation standards (for collections, or parts of) up to their optimal level of documentation depending on type, user requirements and available resources.
- Continuing the Library Moves project in preparation for the physical move of the Theatre Collection to the New University Library; implementing a bar coding system to record location and movement and link this information to the catalogue data.
- Input into the set up and implementation of Preservica as the University's digital asset management system, and the interoperability between Preservica and Calm to improve accessibility to our digital collections.

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