



VCU

Libraries

Guidelines for Photography and Film

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1. Purpose.

Collections in Photography and Film support teaching, research, and practice consistent with the curriculum at a Doctoral University: Highest Research Activity, under Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education with bachelor's and master's degree programs in the field.

The primary goal of the program is to provide a comprehensive aesthetic and technical understanding of the media of photography and film, preparing students for careers in these industries.

The department's Bachelor of Fine Arts has two separate tracks, one for photography and one for film. The photography track focuses on the technical and conceptual skills for a career as a professional artist or commercial photographer. Students who follow the film track produce experimental films and documentaries. The department also offers a Master of Fine Arts degree.

2. General Collection Guidelines.

A. Language.

Technical materials are purchased almost exclusively in English. For the history of photography, materials may be purchased in major foreign languages. Where images are the primary value of a resource, language is not a concern.



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B. Chronology.

Coverage spans the history of photography and film from their beginnings to the present, with an emphasis on the works of the late 20th and 21st century.

C. Geography.

No restrictions.

D. Publication Date.

There is active collecting of current in-print materials. Retrospective and out-of-print materials of significance are also acquired.

E. Treatment of Subject.

Material providing historical, technical, or critical treatment is collected. Generally, theses, textbooks, and materials oriented at juvenile, young adult, and popular “how to” books are not collected.

F. Types of Materials and Formats.

Monographs, reference works, and serials are collected. Physical copies are preferred where images and illustrations are a primary concern. Electronic versions of serials are actively acquired. Back issues are added to current serials as the budget permits.

Films, including those relating to instruction and practice, are actively collected in DVD format.

James Branch Cabell Library maintains a collection of 16mm films for classroom use. Experimental films and animation are a main focus of this collection, which includes many significant and rare titles. Materials in VHS format are maintained to support curriculum and research. More accessible versions of films held in less current formats are acquired when available and where funds permit.

Streaming media programs are actively sought and evaluated for content relevant to the arts. The development of streaming platforms and the negotiations of copyright is closely monitored. To assure uninterrupted access, DVD is the currently preferred format for core titles and remains the only available option for many titles. Legacy formats are retained for unique and important content and where a particular medium is preferred.

Electronic and online resources to support the Department of Photography and Film are actively sought and evaluated for acquisition.

3. Area Resources.

VCU is a member of the Richmond Area Film/Video Cooperative, which provides access to area members' film holdings.

4. Subjects and Collecting Levels.

Resources for contemporary and historical photography are collected at a research level (4) in conjunction with Art History. Materials on film and technical resources on photography are collected at an instructional support level (3).