

# UCLA FILM AND TELEVISION ARCHIVE

## Collection Policy: Motion Pictures

### I. General Principles

#### A. Why the Archive Collects

The Archive collects motion pictures primarily to support its programs in preservation (restoration, archival duplication and conservation), education (research and curricular support, including Moving Image Archive Studies) and public service (exhibition and other forms of public access).

The Archive may also acquire motion pictures as a means to generate revenue, as the basis for archival productions, or in response to special circumstances. However, these are secondary purposes for acquiring materials, and should be used sparingly or in combination with the primary purposes stated above.

#### B. What the Archive Collects

Specifically, the Archive acquires:

- American studio motion pictures, including feature films, cartoons, newsreels, live action short subjects, trailers and theater announcements;
- American independent motion pictures produced for theatrical release;
- Hollywood “behind the scenes” materials, including screen tests, “on-the-set” or “on-location” footage, home movies of industry figures, etc.);
- UCLA student films, and motion pictures produced by or about UCLA or the University of California; and,
- Motion pictures that document the history and culture of Southern California.

Within these major categories, the Archive attempts to develop extensive and, in some cases, comprehensive holdings. In addition, for preservation the Archive may choose selectively to acquire collections that represent other forms of motion picture production, if the films are determined to be of significant archival value and are unlikely to be preserved elsewhere. And, for education and public exhibition the Archive may choose selectively to acquire collections of non-American motion pictures, if the films are determined to be of significant value for research and teaching and/or for public exhibition.

C. How the Archive Collects

The Archive's decision to accept or to pass on a proposed acquisition is based on two considerations:

1. How well do the materials fit the collection parameters summarized above?
2. How useful will the materials be in serving the purposes for which they are acquired?

Factors used in determining the usefulness of the materials include: the terms of acquisition, the format of the materials, the completeness, quality and condition of the materials, the availability of the materials, the size and organization of the collection, and the expense of the acquisition.

The Director evaluates and decides whether or not to acquire any collection that would have a significant financial or programmatic impact on the Archive, or that falls outside of major collection categories. The Curator, Associate Curator for Collections and the Motion Picture Archivist decide whether or not to acquire routine collections that can be handled with existing resources and that fall within major collection categories. In either case, every reasonable effort is made to consult others on staff who may have a knowledge of or interest in a particular collection: the Head of Commercial Development, the Head of Programming, the Manager of ARSC, the Preservation Officer, etc.

The Archive never knowingly acquires motion pictures except from legitimate and responsible sources – usually copyright owners, licensed rights holders, and/or owners of physical property.

D. Other Principles and Practices

The Motion Picture Archivist prepares monthly "Motion Picture Collection Reports" listing recent acquisitions. These reports are distributed by email to: the Director, the Curator, the Associate Curator for Collections, the Head of Commercial Development, the Head of Programming, the Manager of ARSC, the Preservation Officer, and the Development & Public Affairs Officer.

All motion picture materials in the Archive's collection are inventoried and listed in the Archive's online public catalog.

When the Archive passes on a collection that has archival value, it makes reasonable efforts to help the owner identify and contact other archives that may be interested in the acquisition.

This Collection Development Policy is reviewed and updated on an annual basis (or more frequently as the need arises) by the Director, Curator, Associate Curator for Collections, Motion Picture Archivist and other staff members designated by the Director.

## II. Factors in Evaluating Collections for Acquisition

In determining the overall value of a potential acquisition to the Archive, two considerations are applied:

- To what extent do the materials fall within the collection parameters described under “General Principles” above?
  - How useful are the materials likely to be in terms of the factors listed below?
- A. The terms of acquisition, including ownership of the materials and rights to use the materials.
1. Donation vs. Deposit. The Archive prefers to acquire materials as a donation (gift of physical property). Materials should be accepted as a deposit (loan of physical property) only under the following conditions:
    - a. The deposit is open-ended in duration and is expected to be permanent (for the life of the materials), or the Archive believes the depositor will donate the materials at some future date.
    - b. The depositor does not unreasonably restrict the Archive’s use of the materials, and does not intend frequently to access the materials.
    - c. The materials are of sufficient value to the Archive to outweigh the disadvantages of accepting them on a deposit basis.
  2. Rights of Usage. The Archive prefers to obtain the broadest and most complete rights of usage in the materials it acquires.
    - a. Minimally, the Archive must have the right to preserve the materials and/or use the materials (or reference copies) for research and study purposes at UCLA.
    - b. In addition and whenever possible, the Archive would like to have the right to exhibit the materials publicly, loan the materials to other non-profit organizations, and use the materials to generate revenue in support of its services and programs.
  3. Copyright. Ideally, the Archive prefers obtaining the underlying copyright in the materials it acquires. In negotiating for an acquisition, the assignment of copyright should be explored whenever it seems reasonable to do so.

4. See Attachment A for a detailed list of the rights of usage that the Archive tries to obtain in negotiating for a collection.
- B. The format of the materials and that format's suitability for the materials' intended uses.
1. For preservation, the Archive collects motion picture materials in original formats (usually 35mm, sometimes 16mm).
    - a. Preprint elements (negatives or internegatives, master positives or interpositives), sound elements and prints are collected.
    - b. Secondary film formats (for example, 16mm prints of films produced in 35mm) are collected only if a motion picture no longer exists in its original format or if existing original format copies have flaws that can be corrected using secondary format copies.
    - c. Video reference copies are acquired rarely, and usually only for reference purposes during the restoration process.
  2. For education, the Archive collects motion picture prints in original and secondary film formats and video reference copies.
  3. For public exhibition, the Archive collects motion picture prints in original formats.
- C. The completeness, quality and condition of the materials. The Archive prefers to acquire motion pictures as complete copies, with good (or better) picture and sound quality and in good (or better) physical condition. Incomplete or substandard materials are accepted only if they represent best remaining copies or may be useful in a restoration project.
- D. The availability of the materials. The Archive prioritizes acquiring materials that are unique, best remaining copies or are otherwise difficult to obtain. In such cases, the rarity of the materials may outweigh other factors, especially if the titles are considered significant for preservation.
- E. The size and organization of the collection, and whether the collection must be accepted in its entirety or can be acquired in part.
1. The size and organization of a collection must be evaluated in terms of the cost of acquisition, storage requirements, and impact (both positive and negative) on existing programs and priorities.
  2. The Archive prefers to have flexibility in selecting specific items for acquisition, especially if the overall collection is large and of mixed or marginal value.
- F. The expense of acquiring the collection, and the Archive's options for covering the costs.

1. An “intake” budget must be prepared for each large or unusual collection that the Archive considers acquiring, including the costs of shipping, processing, inventory, packaging for storage, and preparation for use.
2. Whenever feasible, the Archive will request that intake costs be covered by the donor/depositor or will raise intake costs from other outside parties.

### **III. Specific Categories of Films Not Collected.**

- A. For specific purposes, the Archive may choose to acquire motion pictures from any nation representing any form of film production. However, the Archive does not usually acquire the following types of materials:
    1. Films not intended for general public distribution: educational and industrial films, ethnographic and anthropological films, government films, advertising films, scientific and medical films, etc.
    2. Films produced outside the U.S., without significant participation by American companies or filmmakers (unless acquired for education or public exhibition).
    3. Experimental and avant-garde films (unless acquired for preservation).
    4. Regional films and films for specialized audiences (unless pertaining to Southern California).
    5. Student films and other amateur films (unless made by UCLA students or by film industry leaders of recognized importance).
    6. Films represented in the Archive’s collections by materials that are of equal or better quality and/or are held under more favorable terms of acquisition.
    7. Incomplete, damaged or deteriorating materials (unless unique or best remaining copies of works that otherwise meet collection criteria.)
  - B. Whenever possible, the Archive attempts to cull its existing holdings to eliminate materials of insufficient value. In doing so, every reasonable effort is made to relocate materials to other non-profit institutions.
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