

The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives

Access Policy and Procedures

March 2010

General Guidelines

The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives is accessible to Museum staff and to qualified scholarly researchers at the graduate level and above. Requests for access should be sent via email to archives@metmuseum.org and should include a brief summary of the research project, an outline of sources already consulted, and a curriculum vitae or résumé. Access is granted at the discretion of Archives staff and certain materials may be restricted. Researchers must read, fill out, and sign the form “Policy and Procedures Governing the Use of Unpublished Material in Museum Files” prior to conducting research. By doing so, the researcher agrees to the terms and conditions stated.

Reading Room Procedures

All research visits must be scheduled in advance. Regular hours are Tuesday-Friday 9:30-4:45. Friday evening and Saturday hours may be available by special arrangement for researchers working on extended projects. Personal belongings such as coats, purses, briefcases, bags, etc. must be placed away from the work station in an area approved by Archives staff. Pencils, paper, and laptop computers, may be kept with the researcher. Food and drink are not permitted in the reading room. Hands should be washed before beginning research. All documents must be handled with the utmost care. Researchers should look through one folder at a time, maintaining the order in which the documents were delivered. Do not mark, erase, fold, tear, or place adhesives of any kind on documents. The use of pens, indelible pencils, or any unauthorized device is prohibited. Improper handling and/or damage of archival material may result in the suspension of research privileges.

Photocopies or digital photographs of certain archival materials may be made at the discretion of Archives staff. Refer to “Photocopy and Digital Photography Policy and Form” for further information.

Restricted Museum Records

Access to Museum records is granted at the discretion of Archives staff and certain materials may be restricted to protect individual privacy rights and proprietary rights of the Museum, or because the records have not been processed and prepared for use. Restrictions may be imposed on records including, but not limited to: Board of Trustee and Board Committee minutes, personnel files, financial records, legal actions, donor records, acquisition related records including insurance and appraisal records and conservation reports, prices paid for objects in the Museum’s collections, names of vendors from whom objects are purchased, addresses or phone numbers of Trustees, donors or lenders, gift agreements, contracts or negotiations with donors, lenders, employees or others, and anything that would compromise the Museum’s security or operations.

Publications and Permissions

Permission to study archival material does not include the right to photocopy or publish the contents. Researchers wishing to quote from or publish in full any documents held by the Museum Archives must secure permission to do so in advance. Where the Museum does not have literary rights in the material, it cannot grant permission to publish, and the researcher must therefore secure this permission himself or herself from the author or his or her literary heirs.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art Policy and Procedures Governing the Use of Unpublished Material in Museum Files

Adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Metropolitan Museum of Art on January 9, 1979

The Trustees recognize that the curatorial and other departments regularly receive requests to examine unpublished information and documentation contained in the Museum files.* Each request to examine or publish is to be evaluated in terms of its seriousness and relevance, and in terms of Section I, paragraph H of the General Regulations of the Museum. The Museum Staff will continue to accommodate these requests, taking into account the other demands on the departmental staff and the best interests of the Museum. Photo copying of documents is not normally permitted. If the person requesting information—including members of the staff and Trustees—intends to publish it, he or she should be asked to write a letter to the Department Head giving details of the proposed use. If the project meets the above qualifications, the Department Head will accommodate the request. If the Department Head has any reservations, he or she should consult the Vice President, Secretary and Counsel, who shall advise the Department Head or, in special cases, refer the question to the Professional Practices Committee.

Every researcher should be informed that he or she must, prior to publication, apply in writing to the Vice President, Secretary and Counsel for permission to publish, citing specifically all the source material to be used or quoted.** Permission will ordinarily be granted after suitable review including consultation with the appropriate Department Head. Where the Museum does not have literary rights in the material, it cannot grant permission to publish, and the researcher must therefore secure this permission himself or herself from the author or his or her literary heirs.

Kindly sign this sheet in the space provided below, indicating that you have read this statement of procedures and will comply with them. This form will be kept on file in the appropriate department of the Museum and a copy will be furnished to you for your records.

*Requests for Information from the press are covered by Section I, paragraph I of the Museum's General Regulations. Access to files, however, is normally limited to scholars, graduate students, staff members and Trustees.

**See "Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives Access Policy and Procedures" for further information regarding publication permissions.

I have read and agree to abide by the terms of the conditions above and as stated in "The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives Access Policies and Procedures." I understand that my failure to follow these terms may result in the termination of my research privileges.

RECEIVED: _____ Date: _____
Name

Address _____

Telephone _____

Other pertinent information: _____

