

SFMOMA Archives

Access Policy

User Communities

Although primarily for the use of Museum staff, the archives also serve the larger art community and are open by appointment to graduate students, university and college faculty, professional artists, collectors, art historians, staff of other museums and art galleries, and independent researchers.

Resources and Restrictions

The mission of the Archives is to collect, preserve, and make available non-current records of enduring value for the institution. It is the primary source of information relating to the Museum's history, including past exhibitions, activities, and events; the museum's interactions with significant artistic figures and organizations; and the museum's role as a vital advocate for contemporary art on the West Coast. To support this mission, collections in the archives include comprehensive exhibition files; administrative papers of museum directors, curators, and departments; and records of related organizations such as MAC and SECA.

The Archives seeks to make historical materials available for research use to the fullest extent possible. Some records must be restricted to protect the legitimate interests of the Museum and the privacy of individuals. Those materials that must be closed temporarily in accordance with Museum policy or donor restrictions will be reviewed from time to time and opened as soon as the need for restriction has passed. Unrestricted materials will be made equally available to all researchers.

Unprocessed materials are not available to outside researchers.

Some information, such as condition, prices, and insurance values of works of art are not available to outside users. Records pertaining to anonymous donors, fundraising, personnel, and Board of Trustee and Committee meetings are restricted.

Intellectual Access and Reference Services

Users are informed of the Museum's archival resources through finding aids, which are available in the reading room and are available in PDF on our website.

Records are arranged, described, and stored according to generally accepted archival standards; depending upon demand and potential research value, selected material may be processed in greater or lesser detail.

Assistance is provided in locating relevant records using archives finding aids, and simple queries will be answered as time permits.

Fees

Museum admission need not be paid to use the Archives; however, an appointment is required. An appointment with the Archives does not allow users access to the galleries. (Regular Museum admission is required for gallery access.) Fees for reproductions of archival materials depend on the format of the requested copy.

Physical Access and Conditions of Use

All visiting researchers must enter by the Minna Street entrance and check in at the guard station. Coats, packages, briefcases, book bags, handbags, and personal books must be checked at the first-floor coat check before entering the library. Researchers must submit a completed [Application for Access](#), and valid photo identification must be presented for admittance to the Archives. For the protection of the collections, researchers must agree to abide by the [Conditions of Use](#).

The archives are open by appointment only. Appointments to visit the archives may be made by calling 415.357.4120 or emailing archives@sfmoma.org.

Use of Information

Permission to study archival material does not include the right to photocopy or publish the contents. Requests for copies or permission to publish must be submitted in writing according to the [Duplication Policy](#) or the [Permission Policy](#). Citations to archival materials should follow [the Archives' guidelines](#).

Loan of Materials

Archival materials must be used in the reading room, but occasional requests for loans to other institutions for exhibition purposes will be considered on a case by case basis.