



**THE BARBER INSTITUTE OF FINE ARTS  
UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM**

**COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Revised and approved November 2014



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**I. GENERAL OVERVIEW**

1a. Statement of Purpose	5
1b. Description of Collections	6

**2. ACQUISITIONS AND DISPOSALS**

2a. Acquisitions Policy	7
2b. Acquisitions Procedures	11
2c. Disposals Policy	13
2d. Disposals Procedures	13
2e. Review of Policies and Procedures	14

**3. DOCUMENTATION OF COLLECTIONS**

3a. Standards (SPECTRUM)	15
3b. Object Entry	15
3c. Location and Movement Control	15
3d. Cataloguing	16
3f. Retrospective Documentation	16

**4. LOANS**

4a. Loans In Policy	18
4b. Loans In Procedures	18
4c. Loans Out Policy	18
4d. Loans Out Procedures	19

**5. CARE OF COLLECTIONS**

5a. Environmental Conditions	20
5b. Handling	21
5c. Conservation	21

## **6. USE OF COLLECTIONS**

6a. Permanent Displays	23
6b. Access to Stored Works	23
6c. Temporary Exhibitions and Displays	23
6d. Loans Out	24
6e. Digital Access	24
6f. Research	24
6g. Publications	24
6h. Photography	24

## **I. GENERAL OVERVIEW**

### **Ia. Statement of Purpose**

The Barber Institute of Fine Arts [hereafter 'BIFA'] was founded in December 1932 by Hattie, Lady Barber (1869-1933), 'for the study and encouragement of art and music'. Bequeathing a substantial number of shares from her family property company to a Board of Trustees [the Henry Barber Trust, hereafter 'HBT'], she instructed them to create from this a building in memory of her late husband, Sir (William) Henry Barber (1860-1927), a wealthy Birmingham property developer and solicitor. This was to contain a concert hall and gallery, together with a collection of works of art 'of that standard of quality required by the National Gallery and the Wallace Collection'.

BIFA's building, designed by Robert Atkinson and opened in 1939, is recognised as the finest Art Deco building in the city and a masterpiece of gallery design. It was built using HBT funds, but is now owned and maintained by the University of Birmingham [hereafter 'UoB']. Today, BIFA boasts a magnificent collection of paintings, drawings, sculpture and works of art, all of which have been acquired by purchase since 1936, primarily using HBT funds. HBT exclusively owns this collection, but it is managed and run by BIFA, a quasi-department of UoB (currently sitting within the College of Arts and Law). In its range and quality, the BIFA collection comprises one of the finest small picture galleries in the world, and the most representative collection of western art assembled in the United Kingdom in the 20th century. In addition, BIFA houses much of the founder's own modest collection, particularly notable for its tapestries, lace and other textiles; and a substantial collection of Byzantine and medieval coins and seals that is among the very finest in the world. These are also owned by HBT and managed by BIFA.

BIFA's collections, across all media, contain masterpieces by the many of the most highly regarded international artists of their day and provide an impressively compact survey of the main trends in western art, c.1350-c.1950. BIFA now cares for, develops, researches and displays these collections with a lively programme of exhibitions, education and publications, and aims to engage, inform and inspire its key audiences – the students and staff on campus – as well as the broader public beyond.

## **Ib. Description of Collections**

BIFA comprises the following collections:

- i. Lady Barber Collection (LBC) – about 200 works
- ii. BIFA Collection (incl. two items in joint ownership) – 958 works  
Of which:
  - [a] Paintings - 146
  - [b] Drawings, watercolours, pastels, miniatures, ms cuttings - 330
  - [c] Prints, books - 390
  - [d] Sculpture - 59
  - [e] Other Works of Art - 33
- iii. Coins Collection – 15,500 items
- iv. Long-term Loans

### **Paintings**

There are 146 (+ 30 LBC) paintings defined as works primarily in oil on canvas, panel or board, dating from the 13th century to the mid-20th century. There are also seven paintings on long-term loan to BIFA. These works provide an excellent concise survey of European painting within this timeframe, with many of the major artists represented. They are the primary reason that BIFA is widely acclaimed as one of the finest galleries of its size in the world, and one of the finest university fine art collections in the UK. It is also one of the most important fine art collections in the Midlands. Among the highlights are Jan Gossaert's exquisite *Hercules and Deianira*, 1517; Murillo's majestic *Marriage Feast at Cana*, about 1672; Thomas Gainsborough's much-loved *Harvest Wagon*, 1767; and Edgar Degas's seminal *Jockey before the Race*, about 1878/9. The collection is unusually well balanced, but is nevertheless especially strong in such areas as 17th-century Northern European and 19th-century French painting. Although few if any of the paintings are in their original frames, nevertheless the collection includes examples of many specific styles, some very fine, ranging in date from the 16th to 20th centuries.

### **Drawings and Miniatures**

BIFA has a collection of some 330 drawings and watercolours, of which 243 are portrait sketches by Edmund Kapp (1890-1978), the largest such collection of his work (+ 31 LBC items, many by Lady Barber). The remaining works cover most periods, schools and media, including some watercolours, miniatures and pastels. Outstanding works include a rare watercolour landscape sketch by Van Dyck and the finest surviving sheet of head studies by

Rembrandt. BIFA has just two miniatures (+ 3 LBC), but a further 56 are on extended loan from two eminent private UK collections. Together, they provide a reasonable and high quality survey of the medium as used in Britain, c.1600-c.1850, with works in most of the media and supports used (oil, watercolour, bodycolour, enamel; vellum, ivory, paper). There are exceptional examples by Nicholas Hilliard, Isaac Oliver and John Smart (loans).

### **Prints**

BIFA has 386 prints, including some bound volumes of prints (+ 10 LBC), which provide a valuable survey for teaching purposes of all the main European schools and printing techniques, c.1400-1980.

### **Sculpture**

There are 59 sculptures in the collections, including most media, subject types and key European schools and movements, c.1400-c.1900; also a handful of non-Western items from all periods. There is an especially strong selection of bronzes, ranging from works associated with Riccio (1470-1532) and Giambologna (1529-1608) and his Florentine followers, to Degas (1834-1917) and Rodin (1840-1917). Highlights in other media include a magnificent late 14th-century English alabaster panel of the Coronation of the Virgin, a rare and exquisite early 14th-century Parisian carved ivory casket, and L.-F. Roubiliac's superb terracotta bust of Alexander Pope, c.1738. Presiding over all, and the building itself, is John Nost's imposing bronze equestrian monument to George I, 1717-22; this is the oldest public sculpture in Birmingham.

### **Works of Art**

There are 33 other works of art in the collection, representing a range of world cultures and media including furniture, metalwork, enamels, stone carvings and lacquerwork. Ceramics are not permitted by the terms of the founding Deed, although there is one maiolica plaque. In addition, the LBC includes 15 items of furniture, 69 items of lace, 26 tapestry pieces, and 12 other textile items (122 total).

### **Coins**

BIFA is home to one of the finest collections of Roman, Byzantine, Sasanian, medieval Islamic, and medieval and modern Hungarian coins in the world, numbering about 15,500 items. The Byzantine section is second only to that at Dumbarton Oaks, Washington DC (Harvard University). There are about 800 Roman Republican (290-31BC), 4450 Roman Imperial (31BC-AD498), and 7200 Byzantine (AD498-1553) coins, with many extremely rare

examples of specific coin types. There are also some 1500 Sasanian and Turkmen coins, and smaller groupings from other medieval centres. The Hungarian coins (10th-20th centuries) number about 450. In addition, there are more than 150 Byzantine and other seals, and 30 Roman and Byzantine weights. Selections from the collection are regularly on display in themed exhibitions in the Coin Gallery.

## **2. ACQUISITIONS AND DISPOSALS**

### **2a. Acquisitions Policy**

#### **i. Existing Collections**

The collections consist of: paintings, works on paper, sculpture, decorative art, mainly c.1400-c.1984; Byzantine, Roman and medieval coins.

#### **ii. Criteria governing future Acquisitions Policy**

The current policy is based on:

- Lady Barber's Trust Deed, December 1932;
- variation made by the Charity Commission and DES, 1967, allowing the acquisition of works at least 30 years old;
- variation made by the Charity Commission, 1995, allowing loans;
- Coin Curator's policy on collecting coins, agreed by HBT, 2002;
- Director's policy agreed by HBT, 2005;
- variation made 2006, allowing gifts;
- decision by HBT not to create a reserve collection, March 2013.

By the terms of the Founding Trust Deed, the collection was to consist of 'works of art of beauty of exceptional and outstanding merit and comprising pictures painted not later than the end of the 19th Century, furniture tapestries needlework lace medieval manuscripts finely printed books and other works of art of such merit as aforesaid [sic] (but not pottery or china).' This was modified as outlined above. The following comments relate to the whole collection apart from the coins.

The present collecting policy is for HBT to acquire, on the advice of BIFA's Director and Head of Collections and Learning, works of outstanding quality and significance, providing that they can be seen both to add a new dimension to the collection and to relate organically and meaningfully to what is already in it. Special importance is also attached to acquisitions which will make a significant difference not simply to the Institute's collections, but to those of the region, or the nation, particularly if they represent an artistic style or type of work that can be seen nowhere else in the country.

While HBT was able to make exclusively outright purchases in its first fifty years, outside funding is now almost always necessary to support major acquisitions. Since 1992, generous financial assistance has been provided by the HLF, Art Fund, MLA/ V&A Purchase Grant

Fund, RD Turner Charitable Trust, and the Friends of the Barber Institute. On two occasions, works of national significance have been acquired jointly with other institutions (Pietro da Cortona's drawing of *A Wooded River Landscape*, with Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1992; and Anthony van Dyck's *Portrait of François Langlois*, with the National Gallery, London, 1997). On three occasions, in 1984 with Renoir's *Young Woman Seated* (84.1), in 2013 with Reynolds's *Maria and William Gideon* (2013.1), and again in 2015 with Auerbach's *Primrose Hill – Winter* (2015.1), BIFA has benefited from the generous allocation to HBT of a work of national significance via the AIL scheme. BIFA would look to utilise both the AIL scheme and the possibility of joint purchases in the future.

### **2a.iii. Period of time/ Geographical area to which collecting relates**

Mainly Western European, 1250-Present (-30 years).

### **2a.iv. Themes and Priorities for Rationalisation and Disposal**

The Founding Trust Deed of the HBT prohibits any disposals from both the founding collection and all subsequent acquisitions, including gifts (clause 6): '...it is declared that all chattels purchased by the Trustees...and any chattels which may hereafter be added thereto by gift...shall for ever be kept and exhibited *as the Trustees determine in their discretion*' [a Scheme dated 20 January 2006 substituted the words in italics for the word 'together']. Therefore HBT does not have any active themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal.

### **2a.v. Limitations**

HBT recognises its responsibility, in acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that, managed by BIFA, the care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Accreditation Standard. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

### **2a.vi. Other Museums**

HBT will take account of the collecting policies of museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialisms, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

Specific reference is made to the following museum:

- Birmingham Museums Trust

### **2a.vii. Acquisitions not covered**

Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in very exceptional circumstances, and then only after proper consideration by the governing body of the museum itself, having regard to the interests of other museums.

### **2b. Acquisition Procedures**

Major acquisitions are made by HBT acting on advice from the Director and Head of Collections, and with input from the Trustees, as appropriate. Additional funding may be required from external funding bodies, such as the HLF and Art Fund, and this will be pursued and managed by BIFA staff.

2b.i. HBT will exercise due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that it can acquire a valid title to the item in question.

2b.ii. In particular, HBT will not acquire any object unless it is satisfied that the object has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the UK).

2b.iii. In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, HBT will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The governing body will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.

2b.iv. HBT does not hold or intend to acquire any biological or geological material.

2b.v. HBT will not acquire archaeological antiquities (including excavated ceramics) in any case where HBT or responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures.

2b.vi. Any exceptions to the above clauses 2b.i-iii or 2b.v will only be because HBT is either: acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin; or acquiring an item of minor importance that lacks secure ownership history but in the best judgement of experts in the field concerned has not been illicitly traded; or acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin; or in possession of reliable documentary evidence that the item was exported from its country of origin before 1970.

In these cases the museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

2b.vii. With the exception of one late-thirteenth century German Arm Reliquary, acquired in 1949 (Inv. 49.7), containing part of a human fibula, the HBT does not hold or intend to acquire any human remains. The museum will follow the procedures in the 'Guidance for the care of human remains' issued by DCMS in 2005 in respect of this single item of the collection. HBT, acting on the advice of BIFA's professional staff, may take a decision to return objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. HBT will take such decisions on a case by case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that the procedures described in 2d.i-iv. below will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.

### **Spoliation**

2b.viii. HBT will use the statement of principles 'Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period', issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

### **Management of Archives**

2b.ix. As BIFA holds and intends to acquire archives, including photographs and printed ephemera, BIFA / UoB will be guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom (3rd ed., 2002).

## **2c. Disposal Policy**

The Founding Trust Deed of the HBT prohibits any active disposals (see 2a.iv., above). This is applicable to both the founding collection of articles bequeathed by Lady Barber and all subsequent and future acquisitions (including gifts). The tightly defined nature of the HBT's acquisition policy, in terms of quality and fit, as set out by the Deed of Trust, means that issues of unsustainability, pertinent to many museums, are not applicable here. Further to ensure sustainability, the HBT has specifically decided not to create reserve collections (see 2a ii). The HBT will never dispose of any acquired objects which are later discovered to be, for example, fakes or copies, as these are considered part of the history of the HBT collection. In effect, the HBT will only ever undertake disposals for exceptional conservation and safety reasons, for example, due to complete deterioration or destruction of the object.

## **2d. Disposal Procedures**

If, however, in these exceptional circumstances listed above, disposal of a work or works from the collection is deemed necessary by HBT, the following procedures will apply:

2d.i HBT will ensure that the disposal process is carried out openly and with transparency.

2d.ii By definition, HBT has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for society in relation to its stated objectives. Disposals will only be made in the exceptional circumstances of an object deemed to have deteriorated so as to be too badly damaged to be of any use for the purposes of the collection, or because the object has been destroyed.

2.d.iii HBT will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item and agreements on disposals made with donors will be taken into account.

2d.iv When disposal of an object is being considered, HBT will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. HBT does not undertake disposal by sale under the terms of the Trust Deed (see 2c) therefore any repayment of an original grant and/or proportion of the proceeds from sale is not relevant to this organisation.

2d.v The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by HBT only after full considerations of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including the public benefit, the implications for HBT's collections, and collections held by museums and other organisations

collecting the same material or in related fields, will be considered. External expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will be sought. HBT will only ever be motivated by exceptional conservation and safety reasons as described at 2c. Any disposal involving human remains (see 2b.vii) would follow the procedures in the 'Guidance for care of human remains in museums' issued by DCMS in 2005.

2d.vi A decision to dispose of an object, in these exceptional circumstances, will be the responsibility of HBT acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator of the collection acting alone.

2d.vii Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM procedure on de-accession and disposal.

## **2e. Review of Policies and Procedures**

The Acquisition and Disposal Policies will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years.

### **3. DOCUMENTATION OF COLLECTIONS**

#### **3a. Standards (SPECTRUM)**

As an accredited gallery, the BIFA follows the eight SPECTRUM Primary Procedures when documenting and caring for its collection.

The eight Primary Procedures required by Accreditation are:

- Object entry
- Acquisition
- Location and movement control
- Cataloguing
- Object exit
- Retrospective documentation
- Loans in [**see Section 4b**]
- Loans out [**see Section 4d**]

#### **3b. Object Entry**

Regardless of its current status, every item that enters BIFA is recorded in the Entry & Exit Book. This includes potential acquisitions, loans and objects brought in for identification.

All items entering the gallery that do not belong to the permanent collection will be assigned an Entry Number. In the case of multiple works entering for the purpose of an exhibition these will be assigned one number per batch. Objects which are on long-term loan will be assigned a Loan Number and catalogued in the same way as a new acquisition.

#### **3c. Location and Movement Control**

Movement of individual objects is undertaken by the Curatorial Technician with the assistance of the Collections Assistant. The new location is recorded on a Location Movement form and the Mimsy XG database is updated by the Collections Assistant.

BIFA uses Mimsy XG as its database cataloguing software. BIFA maintains and updates records of each works of art in the BIFA collection, and, follows SPECTRUM Standards where appropriate.

Any recommended changes to the attribution, title or dating of an object are made only with the approval of HBT. Any borrower is bound by the BIFA Loan Agreement to use the BIFA attribution.

### **3d. Cataloguing**

All acquisitions and long-term loans have a curatorial file in which information relevant to the work is stored permanently, excluding documents relating to their recent exhibition. The files are continually updated to include up-to-date information regarding the condition of the object and any new research. Selected information is continually transferred onto the computerised collections management system by the Collections Assistant and the Exhibitions and Loans Officer.

The most recent comprehensive Handbook of the BIFA's collections, which includes illustrated summary entries for all the paintings, drawings, sculpture, miniatures and works of art accessioned to 1999, gives sitter's name, title, dates and occupation, accession number of object, medium, size, artist's name, date of object (where known) and credit line. Around 300 works are illustrated in black and white (ten paintings also in colour). The last full catalogue of the BIFA primary collection (paintings, drawings and miniatures) was published in 1952. All the oil paintings in BIFA (including the Lady Barber collection) are reproduced in the PCF *Oil Paintings in Public Ownership* volume for Birmingham, London, 2008. Selected drawings were published in *Master Drawings from the Barber Institute*, London, 1986. Prints in the collection, and items in the Lady Barber Collection are listed individually (without illustrations), but the coins merely enumerated. A Handlist of sculpture in the BIFA was produced in 2011. *A Selection of Byzantine Coins in the Barber Institute of Fine Arts* and *A Handlist of Byzantine Lead Seals and Tokens in the Barber Institute of Fine Arts*, were both published in 1985.

Specific works, especially key paintings frequently requested for loan exhibitions, appear in exhibition catalogues published by other institutions. Works by well-documented figures (e.g. Poussin, Van Dyck, Reynolds) are included in their respective catalogues raisonnés.

### **3e. Retrospective Documentation**

Although the records at the BIFA currently meet the SPECTRUM minimum standards there are areas where information about the objects and collections could be improved. The Collections Assistant, with the aid of interns and volunteers, is responsible for collating and adding more detail to the Mimsy XG database and the online collection. More research is

being done on the prints and drawings and this will be included in the object files and on the collection database.

## **4. LOANS**

### **4a. Loans In Policy**

Short-term loans (up to 4 months) are usually accepted only as part of special exhibitions/ displays and as a basic requirement need only to be pertinent to that exhibition/ loan and significant in illustrating its academic thesis. Specific and particular approval of HBT is not usually required in this instance.

Mid- (4-12 months) and long-term (more than 12 months) loans, which are not exhibition-related, are sought or accepted on the basis that they are of the quality of the permanent collection, and help fill gaps in it or in some way enhance it. They are usually by an artist not otherwise represented in BIFA. Any such additions, however, must be carefully scrutinised against:

- the organic integrity of the historic collection;
- shortage of display space – new arrivals displace existing works from the historic collection;
- the conditions outlined in the ACE Accreditation Document (or its successor).

Each must also be approved by HBT, whose governing rules on acquisitions also apply to such loans.

### **4b. Loans In Procedures**

See separate document.

### **4c. Loans Out Policy**

HBT has a long and generous tradition of lending works to other galleries within the UK and internationally for temporary public exhibitions. This can be an excellent way of contributing to the increase and dissemination of knowledge and enabling those unable to visit Birmingham to enjoy and learn from the collections in addition to raising the profile of BIFA.

Given the quality of this small but significant collection, many requests are received, particularly for key paintings most of which are on permanent display, so lending can have a major impact on the experience of students and visitors to BIFA. We therefore ask that potential borrowers demonstrate that the work(s) requested make a specific and substantial contribution to the theme and purpose of the temporary exhibition and that the exhibition itself advances scholarly knowledge and/or increases public engagement. Where a loan would have a serious effect on the displays, but HBT is otherwise willing to lend in principle,

we may ask the borrower to provide a reciprocal loan at their cost. Works which have been lent within the last three years will only be lent again under exceptional circumstances. Only works assessed as fit to travel will be considered for loan. BIFA will also assess requests against existing commitments, including our internal programme, as well as other loan activity.

The borrowing institution must be an appropriate organisation of established reputation whose venue is accessible to the public; loans are not made to private individuals. HBT will not lend to any exhibition which includes objects known to have been stolen, illegally exported or illegally excavated. For any work whose provenance between 1933 and 1945 is uncertain, anti-seizure legislation must be in place at the borrower's jurisdiction. The borrower must be able to satisfy standard transport, handling, security, environmental and insurance requirements and take responsibility for these arrangements.

BIFA does not charge a loan administration fee but the borrower must meet all costs incurred by BIFA in association with the loan process, including the initial condition assessment which will be made prior to any recommendation. Other costs to be recouped may include conservation and preparation of the work.

Decisions to lend are taken by the Board of HBT at meetings held three times a year, acting on the recommendation of the Director and her team. Loan requests should be made in writing to the Director and made at least nine months in advance of the opening date for UK venues and at least twelve months in advance for international venues.

In 2013 29 BIFA works were lent to temporary exhibitions, 22 works within the UK and a further 7 to exhibitions worldwide. In the UK, loans were sent to the National Gallery, the Wallace Collection, the National Maritime Museum, the Courtauld Gallery, and the Royal Academy (all London). Worldwide, loans were made to The Morgan Library and Museum, and the New York Historical Society (both New York); the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid; the Grand Palais, Paris; the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; the Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem; and the Caixa Forum, Barcelona. BIFA has one work out on long-term loan [a 17th-century 'Sheldon' tapestry cushion cover (Lady Barber Collection) to the National Trust (Chastleton House, Oxfordshire)].

#### **4d. Loans Out Procedures**

See separate document.

## **5. CARE OF COLLECTIONS**

### **5a. Environmental Conditions**

#### 5a.i Temperature & RH

The air-handling units in the BIFA are set to run within the parameters stated in the Government Indemnity Scheme of 21-25°C, with no sudden variations in excess of 5°C in any 24-hour period.

Dehumidification and ventilation are controlled by the same system. Filtration of the air-system is by paper and carbon filters. Care is taken to maintain RH within the range 45-65%, and to ensure that it does not vary by more than 10% in any 24-hour period.

RH and temperature are continuously monitored by electronic equipment and by manual thermohygrographs. The paper charts in the thermohygrographs are checked daily and changed on a weekly basis and the old charts are archived by the Curatorial Technician.

#### 5a.ii Light Levels

Light levels are monitored by hand-held illuminometer, using a Sekonic Handi-Lumi 246. Oil paintings are displayed at <200 lux and more delicate objects such as works on paper are displayed at <50 lux. Lighting in the Print Bays is activated by a motion sensor so that the prints are protected from the light when there is no one in the gallery. Light levels are checked daily by the Collections Technician and during the installation of any work into the galleries.

BIFA excludes UV light from its displays as far as is reasonably possible so to do. UV levels in the gallery are monitored at the same time as the general light levels. UV levels are very low in the galleries and stores because there is minimal or no exposure to natural light.

#### 5a.iii Display Conditions

Temporary display cases and sculpture plinths used for the display of works of art in the collection are produced from museum quality materials to ensure they will not cause any damage to those works. Several sculptures and other 3D works of art are, however, displayed in the original and historical integral wall-mounted cases, which in due course will be upgraded to modern standards.

#### 5a.iv Pest Control

BIFA has an Integrated Pest Management system (IPM), which is an ongoing system for monitoring pest control in the galleries as advised by the leading museum pest control specialist. This includes locating pest traps at specific points throughout the building and maintaining records of pests found.

### **5b. Handling**

Transport of works of art loaned to and from BIFA is undertaken by recognised transport agents using climate-controlled air-ride vehicles with tail lift. Handling and packing of all works of art in the collection is undertaken only by trained members of staff, or under their supervision; or by specialist external handlers/ packers.

BIFA endeavours to ensure that visitors are discouraged and prevented from touching the works of art, either by invigilation, additional glazing or (with loaned items covered by the GIS) barriers.

### **5c. Conservation**

#### 5c.i Policy

BIFA oversees the conservation of the collection on behalf of the HBT, and aims to ensure that all parts of it are maintained in good condition through the application of best practice in preventative or, where required, remedial conservation.

#### 5c.ii Procedures

##### 5c.ii.a. Preventative Conservation

The permanent galleries are monitored by the Collections Assistant and/ or Curatorial Technician during daily weekday patrols and any concerns with the condition of objects on display are reported to the Head of Collections and Learning. Works in storage are checked on a more ad hoc basis, outside the occasional surveys mentioned under 5c.i above. Each gallery is also treated to a quarterly 'deep clean' when picture frames, sculpture, furniture and other exposed works of art are dusted according to current best practice.

#### 5c.ii.b. Remedial Conservation

BIFA does not employ conservators as part of its permanent staff. It draws on a pool of local, highly experienced and accredited specialist freelancers. When an object is considered for conservation treatment, the Head of Collections/ Director selects the appropriate conservator from this pool, and the procedures set out in the **BIFA Conservation Procedures** document (q.v.) are then followed.

## **6. USE OF COLLECTIONS**

### **6a. Permanent Displays**

The primary and most direct use of the collections is its display within the BIFA building in the permanent hang and more temporary exhibitions and displays. At present (August 2015) there are 104 paintings (71% of total), 43 sculptures (73% of total) and 25 other works (75% of total) on display. Light-sensitive works such as prints and drawings are only shown on a rotational basis and, at present, because of space and design limitations, very few are on public display at any one time.

The permanent hang has been largely static in recent years, providing a concise introduction to the Western tradition of oil painting in a chronological hang. Individual paintings are frequently removed for reasons of loan, conservation and photography, and are usually replaced individually from works in storage.

### **6b. Access to Stored Works**

All works in BIFA's collection can be accessed by prior arrangement subject to certain constraints to protect the condition and security of the works. An appointment can be made by contacting the Collections Assistant.

The Print Room attracts more than 150 visitors per annum. This number includes individual researchers, who range from academic specialists and curatorial colleagues from other institutions, to students, special interest groups and members of the general public with specific queries or interests.

The Coins Room attracts more than 550 visitors per annum. These are mostly specialist students or academics from the UoB or other universities, although handling sessions for the general public are also occasionally offered.

### **6c. Temporary Exhibitions and Displays**

BIFA has a lively and extensive programme of exhibitions and displays, many of which feature works from the primary collection. This reflects a central element in the BIFA exhibition policy, which is to scrutinise through well-researched in-focus exhibitions major works in the collection. The main exhibition programme (which consists of 3-4 shows per annum) therefore usually includes one substantial exhibition centred on a painting or other key work of art from the collection; other exhibitions often include, relate to or shed light on works

of art in the collection. In addition, the annual cycle of Print Bay displays (6-8 per annum), is largely devoted to rotating works on paper from the collection. The coin collection has a dedicated exhibition space, which is primarily devoted to 12-18 month displays drawn from the BIFA collection. There are also occasional loan shows relating to coins or the classical or early medieval periods that may include BIFA objects.

#### **6d. Loans Out**

See Section 4c above.

#### **6e. Digital Access**

The online catalogue for BIFA can be accessed through the UoB and BIFA websites. At present (August 2015) there are approximately 1070 records available online, approximately 520 of which are coins. As the documentation backlog is completed more catalogue entries will be uploaded and eventually the whole collection will be available online.

All BIFA's oil paintings (including the Lady Barber Collection) are reproduced with summary information on the BBC Your Paintings website. All BIFA's Continental European Pre-1900 oil paintings are reproduced with extensive academic entries on the VADS NICE Paintings online database.

#### **6f. Research**

BIFA encourages research on the collection. Access by scholars to the collection is encouraged, particularly if their work results in publication or the provision of significant information for the collection database. Information on some parts of the collection is available to scholars online and the BIFA intends to continue to add to this.

#### **6g. Publications**

Information about the collection is on occasion published in printed form so as to maximise public access to the collection, while maintaining scholarly standards. See Section 3d above.

#### **6h. Photography**

Photography, without the use of flash or tripod, is permitted in the galleries for personal use but is restricted to works in the permanent collection. Items on loan are marked with a no photography symbol on the label.

High resolution digital images of works for research or academic publication are available from the Collections Assistant and are subject to reproduction fees dependent on the requested use. Commercial request for image reproduction are handled by the Bridgeman Art Library.