

**ETHICS OF THE DUST:
ON THE CARE OF A UNIVERSITY ART
COLLECTION**

Jessica Natasha Brown

Student Number: BRWJES002 / 1250689

A dissertation presented in fulfilment of the requirements

for the award of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN FINE ART

Michaelis School of Fine Art

Faculty of the Humanities

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

2015

Supervised by Professor Pippa Skotnes and Professor Carolyn Hamilton

DECLARATION

This work has not previously been submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature :

Date :

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

Acknowledgements

My thanks to the following people, without whom the completion of this project would not have been possible:

My supervisors, Professors Carolyn Hamilton & Pippa Skotnes, for their patient support and intellectual generosity;

my funders at Archive and Curatorship: The Visual University and its Columbarium and the Katrine Harries Scholarship;

my colleagues at Michaelis, and my collaborators at the Centre for Curating the Archive;

my fellow agents in the archive from the Archive and Public Culture Research Initiative;

Niek de Greef and Thomas Cartwright (Centre for Curating the Archive);

Christopher Peter & Mary van Blommestein (Irma Stern Museum);

Hugh Amoore & the University of Cape Town Permanent Works of Art Committee;

*Fritha Langerman (University of Cape Town), Julia Charlton (Wits Art Museum),
Brenda Schmahmann (University of Johannesburg);*

Johann Maree, Keith Seaford (SA Parliament Conservation Centre);

my handsome husband, baby boy & dotting family;

and my God, for inspiration when words failed me.

Abstract

This thesis examines the University of Cape Town (UCT) Permanent Works of Art Collection in order to determine its relevance to, and status within, the university. The text traces the historical and current roles of the university art collection in general, before focusing specifically on the UCT art collection's history, including the contexts, events and personalities which shaped its development, from its embryonic beginnings in 1911, to the present. In an era which demands clear correlations between the allocation of resources and relevance to institutional goals, the contemporary university collection is under pressure to demonstrate its potential as a useful educational and interpretive tool within the university (the so-called 'triple mission' of collections: teaching, research and public display), or risk being consigned to obsolescence, even destruction.

Based on a survey of the UCT art collection's holdings, interviews, and a combination of bibliographic and archival research, undertaken between 2011 and 2014, the thesis establishes that, whereas most university collections were traditionally constituted for the purpose of teaching and research, or for the preservation and exhibition of historical artefacts pertaining to a university and/or a specific discipline, this collection does not precisely fulfil either function. By closely reading the collection and its history, the thesis reveals that the role of this collection has shifted over time, and that its history may be

broadly characterised into three phases, marked by attitudes of deference, affirmation and debate, respectively.

Initially, its creation may be seen to have been conditioned by a habit of colonial deference, in which UCT modelled its art collection, as a symbol of gentility, after the accoutrements of older universities, in a European tradition. While this entailed that the art collection was initially developed in close relationship with the discipline of fine art at the university, this connection soon collapsed, as the collection underwent a second, 'affirmatory' phase. During this period, works of art in the collection were primarily valued for their ability to project and assert the university's developing institutional identity as a liberal, modern South African institution. This 'emblematic' function of the collection conflicted with the more conceptual concerns of the discipline at the time and, as a result, the art collection became perceived as principally 'decorative' in nature. More recently, a return to intellectual engagement with the concepts of archive and curatorship at UCT, particularly within the department of fine art, has prompted debate and a renewed interest in the function of the collection.

The thesis argues that the committee responsible for custodianship of the collection has failed to engage critically with its role and function, due to the dislocation between the academic discipline of fine art at the university (that is, its practice and curriculum), from its associated archive: the works of art collection. As a consequence, the collection holds a precarious status and its value for a modern South African institution remains unclear. Unable to justify

its relevance and thus motivate for resources, the physical condition of the art objects has also been negatively affected.

However, this project goes on to argue that a university discipline and collection cannot be completely divorced, and proposes that a growing concern for curatorship at the university, steered by the department of fine art, has prompted a re-examination of the ways in which this collection is used and understood. It proposes that establishing a more meaningful relationship between the university's art collection and department would better frame the collection's role, enabling its function and relevance to be assessed and valued. In deeming the collection as archive, the thesis prompts the University of Cape Town to reflect critically on its role as curator, as well as the custodial responsibilities it has toward the material objects in its care.

Table of Contents

Preface	i
Introduction	1
<i>Background</i>	1
<i>Thesis Question</i>	4
<i>Methodology</i>	6
<i>Context</i>	7
<i>Outline</i>	18
Chapter 1 : Dismantling the ‘University Art Collection’	20
<i>A Brief History of Art & Collections in the University</i>	21
<i>Museums & Collections</i>	48
Chapter 2 : Establishing the UCT Art Collection	55
<i>Identity & Inheritance</i>	56
<i>The Nascent Collection</i>	60
Chapter 3 : Role of the UCT Collection	71
<i>Relevance & Resources</i>	72
<i>Showcasing University Identity</i>	78
Chapter 4 : Stewardship of the UCT Collection	99
<i>Custodianship, Curatorship, Conservation</i>	100
<i>Polishing Policy</i>	114
<i>Agents of Change</i>	125
<i>Patronage & Prestige</i>	138
Chapter 5 : Keeping and Curating the UCT Collection	143
<i>Preservation & Destruction</i>	143
<i>Curating the University</i>	162
<i>On ‘Ethics’ & ‘Dust’</i>	173
Conclusion	180
Bibliography	185
Appendix	201

Preface

This research project was born out of my deep-seated interest in fine art conservation, which coalesced with a concern for the material condition of the University of Cape Town (UCT) Permanent Art Collection.

In 2007, I was awarded a Bachelor of Arts in Fine Arts degree from the University of Cape Town, where I majored in printmaking. For my graduate examination and exhibition, I produced a series of highly detailed copper-plate etchings. I found the technical process of printmaking to be fascinating, an alchemical transformation, and became acutely aware of how even the slightest unwanted inclusions, such as traces of ink or specks of dust, could interfere with the final impression on pristine cotton paper.

After graduating, my preference for detail and hand-rendered work enabled me to find a niche in the illustration field. Specifically, I specialised in the reproduction of manuscripts and prints for the international museum context, in such instances where an original was deemed too fragile for transportation or display. For the first time, I became aware of the hidden sophistication of violence in museums and galleries; the forms of both passive and active damage enacted upon works of art, and the strategies of care and artifice that existed to counter these different forms of destruction. I was intrigued by the perception that the destruction of art differed to that of other objects and I determined to

pursue a career in art conservation-restoration, in order to participate in this cult of conserving, restoring and preserving art collections.

However, post-graduate programmes in the conservation-restoration of fine art are not currently available in South Africa. I was therefore grateful to have the rare opportunity to participate in a brief apprenticeship to fine arts conservator, Angela Zehnder, at the South African National Gallery. While I was privileged to benefit from her experience, as well as her assistance in applying for post-graduate programmes in the conservation of fine art in the United Kingdom, I was unable to secure the necessary funding that would enable me to accept a position overseas.

I then approached Professor Pippa Skotnes, who suggested I consider conducting a postgraduate research degree through the Faculty of Fine Art at the University of Cape Town, by which means I could have the opportunity to pursue similar interests to those offered by a degree in fine arts conservation-restoration. I therefore enrolled as a candidate for the Masters of Art in Fine Art degree at UCT with the intention of pursuing a research project in the ethics of conservation.

The Master's thesis itself was initially expected to take the form of a critical analysis of the physical condition of several artworks belonging to the university's own Permanent Works of Art Collection, before expanding upon certain philosophical aspects of the conservation treatment process; a basic

framework that was modelled on the Courtauld Institute of Art approach. Unfortunately, due to the dearth of available training, skilled art conservators in this country are scarce and the number of professionals available for postgraduate supervision is smaller still. While the university library had once boasted of its own paper and book conservation laboratory, this was obliged to close in 2008, after the retirement of its senior conservator, Mr Johann Maree. In order to accommodate the requirements of this particular project, Mr Maree was persuaded to come out of retirement so as to hold several workshops at the university, demonstrating the practical aspects of paper conservation, in association with Mr Keith Seaford and the South African Parliament Conservation Centre.

Mr Maree specialises in the conservation-restoration of books and paper objects, and, as I had formerly trained as a fine art print-maker, it seemed only natural that I should turn my attention to the works on paper within the university's collection. For this reason, I settled myself amidst the aging prints that fill the small, dusty room at the back of the Old Medical School Building on the university's Hiddingh campus: the Katrine Harries Print Cabinet.

The Katrine Harries Print Cabinet (KHPC) is affectionately named in honour of teacher, illustrator and artist-lithographer, Katarine Friderike Harries, in recognition of her role in establishing the teaching of printmaking as a discipline at the Michaelis School of Fine Art (Skotnes, 1991: 2). The collection was initially conceived with the objectives of promoting, collecting and exhibiting prints, as well as cataloguing, conserving and documenting the university's

significant print collection, housed at the Michaelis School of Fine Art, the university's Fine Art Department. The KHPC, curated by Professors Stephen Inggs and Pippa Skotnes, represents a valuable collection of works by local and international printmakers. It represents one of the university's more significant collections of works of art, and has also been responsible for the production and publication of a series of limited edition artists' books, including original prints (Skotnes, 1991: 3-4).

However, before selecting the individual works that were to receive my careful attention for the remainder of the project, I was tasked with conducting a general survey of the material condition of the cabinet's contents as well as the environmental conditions affecting the print collection. Under Mr Maree's supervision, I was coached through these exercises, considered to be standard procedure in the conservation field, and which are designed to ascertain specific threats to a collection and to identify preventative measures for implementation. As part of this process, both the interior and exterior of the premises housing the KHPC were examined, so that all potential and present risks might be assessed and noted. Each item of cabinet furniture, within which the prints are stored, was scrutinised, following which each and every print was carefully removed and examined. The items were compared to holdings lists and the most common forms of visible damage were diagnosed and listed [See Appendix: The Katrine Harries Print Cabinet Condition Report].

In the process of conducting this survey, I soon discovered that the cabinet's function had been sorely neglected in terms of both passive and interventive

conservation. Regrettably, the dire condition of the cabinet and the intercessions required to stabilise the works were beyond the capabilities of one individual, instead requiring long-term financial and labour-intensive investment from the institution. Some of the more pressing shortcomings included the absence of curatorship, insufficient storage space and equipment, lack of environmental controls, as well as a critical need of trained conservation staff, equipment and supplies.

On further reflection, many of the issues identified as threats to the preservation of these works were not isolated to the print and paper rooms, but were instead indicative of the general condition of the greater Permanent Works of Art Collection, as a whole. The idiosyncratic approach adopted by the University of Cape Town toward its own art collection attracted my interest and the appearance of an apparent widespread lack of concern for the physical condition of its artwork gave me pause to rethink the iteration of my project. The intensive conservation of a few, selected art objects now appeared conspicuously opposed to the approach adopted by the university towards its art collection, whether intentional or by default. I was curious to ascertain the university's position on its perceived role as custodian of its artworks. For this reason, my research project underwent a metamorphosis in order to seek to understand the relevance of the art collection within the university's academic project and what responsibilities the University of Cape Town had towards the objects in its care.

My particular interests in curatorship within the university context situated my research within the *Centre for Curating the Archive* (CCA), based at the Michaelis

School of Fine Art, part of the *Archive and Curatorship: the visual university and its columbarium* (ARC) programme, a Vice-Chancellor's strategic focus at the University of Cape Town. These initiatives were established to examine archival and curatorial effects, and the possibilities of creative practices in the generation of knowledge, across all faculties. The aspiration of the ARC project lies in finding a means by which to reveal or express the often-complex nature of scholarship and research in the visual arts. At UCT, Michaelis has taken the initiative in developing a PhD to accommodate creative work, and in association with the ARC, has identified curatorship as a central activity in which research can find expression both in discourse and publication (Hamilton & Skotnes, 2014).

My participation in the ARC programme also earned me an invitation to participate in the *Archive and Public Culture Research Initiative* (APC), a cross-disciplinary research project, headed by Professor Carolyn Hamilton. The APC was established to grapple with South Africa's complex archival inheritance and critical questions about history, memory, identity and the public sphere in the post-colony. This thesis owes no small debt of gratitude to the nurture and support provided by the research workshops and seminars conducted through the collaboration between the CCA and APC projects.

Introduction

Background

The University of Cape Town Permanent Art Collection is the university's principal art collection, and includes several distinct, subsidiary collections; among them, the Centre for African Studies (CAS) Art Collection¹ and the Katrine Harries Print Cabinet (KHPC).² The university is also responsible for the management of the Irma Stern Museum (ISM), the artist's former home in Rosebank, which houses a permanent collection of the artist's work, as well as her private collection of furniture and African art.³

At present, the university does not possess a dedicated gallery space for the exhibition of works from the Permanent Art Collection. This has, instead, allowed for the creation of what it terms an 'open' or 'living' museum (McEvoy, 2011), with the works on permanent display across the faculties. Hidden in plain

¹ The CAS collection was initiated in 1989, when funds were allocated for the purchase of artworks for the newly-built department, which includes a gallery for exhibitions. A special committee was formed and tasked with a specific acquisitions policy; which demonstrated a preference for modern, South African art, 'primarily but not exclusively by black South Africans' (Franzidis, 2007: ii).

² The KHPC comprises of several hundred original prints, which were consolidated in 1986 and curated by Stephen Inggs and Pippa Skotnes, in honour of the former printmaker and teacher at the Michaelis School of Fine Art, UCT (Skotnes, 1991: 3).

³ It is important to clarify that the contents of the Irma Stern Museum, although administered by the university, are owned by the trustees of her estate and do not form part of the UCT Permanent Works of Art Collection, which nevertheless does include some other examples of Stern's work. A separate board, distinct from the university's Works of Art Committee, meets to discuss matters related to the museum. (However, multiple instances of 'overlap' between these two entities are discussed later in the text.)

sight, the collection is therefore scattered among the various campuses and residences, in over fifty buildings extending across five main sites in Cape Town; ranging from the Upper Campus on the slopes of Table Mountain in Rondebosch, to the Medical School at the Groote Schuur Campus in Mowbray to Hiddingh Campus, situated in Orange Street, Gardens, amongst others.

By virtue of its dispersed nature, the works that comprise the permanent collection offer differing degrees of accessibility; some relatively-public outdoor sculptures are to be found in popular, unrestricted areas (such as Bruce Arnott's *Oracle* water feature, on Jameson Plaza on upper campus), while others are located in more contained working environments. Some are mostly frequented by students (for instance, Claudette Schreuders' sculpture, *Burnt by the Sun* in the Graça Machel residence), others belong to environments almost exclusively designated to the faculty and university administrators (*Nude Woman Seated in Front of a Mirror* by Jean Welz in the Registrar's office). Others still may receive a more intimate audience, such as those housed in Glenara, the official residence of the vice-chancellor (for instance, an etching by Henry Moore, *Seated Woman 7/15*). A number of others would appear to require pure serendipity or some 'prior knowledge of arcane areas of the university in order to be found' (Tietze, 2007), such as Frank Brangwyn's *Stations of the Cross* in the Rare Books Department.

Some are generally unavailable for viewing at all; a minority are tucked away in improvised storage rooms, and a number of items, records show,⁴ are missing, stolen or misplaced and remain, as yet, unaccounted for (such as the lost *Woman Bather* etching by Pierre August Renoir, presumed missing since 2007). Despite efforts by Mary van Blommestein, on behalf of the Works of Art Committee, to create a digital database of the collection, disorder remains widespread. During a conservation workshop, held on the 11th – 15th April 2011, an engraving by Giovanni Battista Piranesi, *A View of Veduta del Ponte el Castello Sant Angello, Rome*, previously thought to have been lost, was located by Johann Maree and myself in the Katrine Harries Print Cabinet.

Initially dependent on donations and bequests, the university demonstrated an opportunistic approach to the acquisition and care of its collection. With the formation of the Works of Art Committee in 1978 to administer the university's growing collection, came the allocation of an annual budget which enabled the regular purchasing and commissioning of works. Later, this committee would be responsible for implementing a one-percent guide-line, allocating one percent of the budget of all new buildings to the acquisition of artworks. In 2009, the committee formalised its collections policy for the first time, with the intention of bringing cohesion and clarity to the collection (Works of Art Collection Policy, 28 September 2009).

⁴ As per an inventory of artworks, dated 21st May 2011, compiled by Mary van Blommestein on behalf of the Works of Art Committee, for insurance purposes.

Whereas the role of preserving artworks for the benefit of future generations has remained a fundamental tenet of art collections since their origin (Powell, 2007: 1), the strategies adopted in the instance of the University of Cape Town do not demonstrate a corresponding commitment to the welfare of the collection and appear, at least superficially, to be in conflict with this ideal. The relatively healthy budget⁵ for the purchase of artworks permitted by an annual allowance, in addition to the university's one-percent policy, would appear to indicate that the university has a high appreciation for the value and significance of its art collection. Yet, in striking contrast, the physical condition and limited curatorship and conservation of this collection suggest the absence of any institution-wide confidence in its importance.

Thesis Question

The crucial challenge for the survival of any university collection lies in the recognition of its usefulness. In order to survive and flourish, it must receive acknowledgment for a particular contribution of value within its home institution. When a university collection is closely related to a particular discipline and justified for the purposes of research and teaching, the danger of its disappearance is minimal. However, in circumstances where the connection to a discipline is tenuous, and the rationale of research and teaching is not

⁵ For example, R1,5 million was allocated to the Works of Art Committee in 2011 (UCT Works of Art Committee Minutes, 28 May 2012), compared with the Iziko Museums of South Africa acquisitions budget of only R400 000 to the South African National Gallery over the same period (Naidoo, 2014).

immediately apparent, the collection occupies a precarious space, and it may, in turn, become threatened.

This thesis seeks to determine the role and relevance of a university art collection that has developed without explicit connections to any academic research or teaching agenda. At the University of Cape Town, there exists a dislocation between the department of fine art's approach to art production in its discipline and the institution's approach to its collection, respectively. Within the department of fine art, the *practice* of art-making is recognised as an academic division within the university, concerned with critically-engaged enquiry, and the production of art as process is encouraged as a means of understanding, analysis and the generation of knowledge. At the same time, the *products* of art-making which constitute the university's collection are more generally perceived as mere amenity or ornamentation.

In this thesis, I set out to investigate what purpose the UCT art collection serves, what challenges it faces and why it warrants critical attention, as well as how the answers to these questions have shifted and changed over time.

The aims of this research project are as follows: firstly, to gain an understanding of the historical trajectory and current state of knowledge regarding the role of the university art collection, gathered from both primary and secondary sources; secondly, to contribute to an understanding of the relevance and value of the University of Cape Town Permanent Works of Art Collection, where seemingly

the 'triple mission' is not strictly relevant; and thirdly, to offer conclusions and recommendations for the care of the collection, focusing on the role of curatorship.

Methodology

This text situates itself as research in the domains of art conservation and curatorship. In terms of methodology, this research project has been undertaken by means of a historical approach, employing an ethnographic perspective by which the university is defamiliarised and perceived as 'an exotic field' (Davison, 2004: 15). The concept of defamiliarisation was first introduced by Russian formalist, Victor Shklovsky, who claimed that the habitual nature of everyday experience has the tendency to blunt our perception. As Shklovsky says, 'After we see an object several times, we begin to recognise it. The object is in front of us and we know about it, but we do not see it - hence we cannot say anything significant about it' (Shklovsky, 1965: 13). This thesis borrows the concept of estrangement from literary and cultural theory as a position of reflexive distance, in order to avoid being blinded by the ordinary, but rather to preserve the capacity to explore and interpret the complex life and practices of my 'home' institution.

In order to contextualise the entity of the university art collection, the thesis is organised around the intersection of three spheres; museum-collections, academia and visual art. Each of the above fields introduces its own layer of

theoretical complexity and factual specificity. A variety of primary and secondary sources were therefore consulted in the writing of this text. These include literature on museum studies; the history and role of the university; and fine arts conservation.

Context

While the histories of both the public art gallery and the museum have received critical attention in recent years (eg. *Museum Skepticism: a history of the display of art in public galleries* [Carrier, 2006], *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* [Bennett, 1995]), the role of universities as participants in the collection and display of artworks remains under-represented.⁶ While collections are not their primary focus, universities do, however, participate alongside the museum and gallery in the possession, display and, to varying degrees, the interpretation of art objects. This shortage in the available academic literature is therefore anomalous, especially when considering the sheer number of universities housing significant art collections, and which rival national galleries and museums in terms of both funding and prize pieces.

Because this research is primarily focused on the role of the university *collection*, it may therefore be said to reside within the broader field of museology or

⁶ Some exceptions to this are found in the so-called 'guerrilla' or 'grey' literature. That is, material usually understood to have been issued by organisations or institutions where the primary function is not publishing *per se*. These may include 'newsletters, reports, working papers, theses, government documents, bulletins, fact sheets, conference proceedings and other publications' (Weintraub, 2000).

museum studies; that is, the theoretical approach to the functions, the activities and the role of the museum or institutional collection in society (Desvallées & Mairesse, 2010: 53-56). However, it can be argued that the history and role of the majority of university collections have been driven by the institution of the university, rather than by the evolution and role of museums *per se* (Lourenço, 2005: 10). This thesis therefore draws on literature concerning how knowledge has been constructed and disseminated in the university. By ‘university’, I refer to an institution offering post-secondary education, which exceeds professional training through the pursuit of scholarship and research in multiple disciplines, and which also enjoys ‘some form of institutional autonomy as far as its intellectual activities are concerned’ (Collini, 2011).

In the thesis, I have chosen to consider the modern, South African university as the lineal descendant of the medieval European institution for two reasons: firstly, few countries have published surveys of university collections, and what little has been published generally belongs to the realm of grey literature. We therefore have little academic writing available on university museums, collections and university heritage in South Africa (as with China, India, Russia, the Middle East and Central Asia, South America or, indeed, much of the African continent) (Lourenço & Stanbury, 2006: 12). Secondly, because the South African higher education system was heavily influenced by European colonialism, its institutions of higher learning (dating to the 19th century), including the University of Cape Town, may be said to follow in a European tradition of the

university;⁷ with a similar fundamental pattern of organisation, and in accordance with humanist ideas of scholarship and research.⁸

A European model is therefore the most helpful for the purpose of tracing the historical traditions of university museums/collections, and is a useful means by which to examine the changing relationships between the university's mission and its object collections, as well as the inclusion of art into the academic project. This approach to the evolution of the idea of the university from its medieval origins to the present, though not without its flaws, is therefore preferred for contextualising the historical and modern role of the entity of the university art collection (i.e. Boylan, 1999; King & Marstine, 2006; MacGregor, 2001; Weeks, 2000; Zeller, 1985). However, while local institutions have historically been informed by a European model, their contemporary South African specificity also presents opportunities for thinking about their collections in new ways.

In order to understand its mission and the role of its collections, it is important to consider the history and philosophy of the university itself (Haskins & Lewis, 2002; Newman & Turner, 1996; Perkin, 2006; Rüegg & de Ridder-Symoens, 1992). Arising within the medieval European universities, Scholasticism was the dominant form of critical thought, and was characterised by the education, or

⁷ Of course, societies develop as a result of a number of complex reactions and this is undoubtedly a simplification of a form of culture and its transmission. However, of interest here is that there pre-existed a set of European customs relating to systems of pedagogy and its relationships with collections of objects, which had distinctive characteristics and which were deliberately replicated within the South African context.

⁸ Although the 16th-century Islamic university at Sankore, Timbuktu, in Mali, is occasionally cited as historical evidence of the university's cultural origins in Africa, the institution demonstrates no established continuity with contemporary African universities and is therefore not considered to be relevant to this historical study (Izevbaye, 2007: 217).

teaching, mission. It emphasised human reason or logic, subordinate to biblical truth, and laid the foundations for modern empirical science (Scott, 2006: 2-3). The scholastic method was later eclipsed by the Renaissance philosophy of Humanism, which developed and emphasised the individual, human reason, freedom and ethics. Following the doctrine of Wilhelm von Humboldt, the neo-humanist German university of the 19th century promoted original inquiry and object-based research as its central mission (Scott, 2006: 3).

‘Mission’ is the preferred modern term adopted by universities to describe their basic purpose to various communities and publics (Scott, 2006: 1). It reflects not only the religious origins of the institution, but also a sense in which the university perceives itself to have assumed a charge or duty. In fact, the echo of responsibility invoked by the word *mission* is often expressed in the form of a written statement of accountability by the university management. Today’s university ‘mission statements’ are often based on the two primary 20th century missions of the university; *education*, and *research*, to which individual institutions frequently add their own educational, social, political, or spiritual aims (Scott, 2006: 2).

Research on university museums has, in the past, been published in specialised journals related to the disciplines represented in the relevant collections and therefore, although substantial, it is somewhat dispersed. Relatively recent, this literature dates primarily to the 1960s (Lourenço, 2005: 88). Prior to this, few fundamental theoretical texts were published, although exceptions include papers by Ruthven (e.g. 1931), Coleman (e.g. 1942) and Rodeck (e.g. 1950; 1952).

As Marta C. Lourenço has observed, the literature on university collection-museums has 'peaked' three times during the last century (2005: 88). The first instance took place during the 1960s, when a debate concerning professional standards and broader audiences first surfaced in publications regarding university museums. The second 'peak' took place in the 1980s, after Alan Warhurst published an influential contribution to the subject of university museums within the *Manual of Curatorship: a guide to museum practice* (1984) as well as a diagnosis of a 'triple crisis' in the field: of identity or purpose, recognition and resources (Warhurst, 1986: 137).

These developments resulted in a substantial increase in the 'quantity and quality' of papers, as well as a third sustained period of attention concerning the relevance of university collections, which began in the late 1990s and continues to the present (Lourenço, 2005: 88). For instance, James Hamilton, curator of the University of Birmingham collections, published a paper entitled, 'The Role of the University Curator in the 1990s' (1995), which addressed the purpose and function of both the university museum and its curator, as well as the organisational criteria of collections found within universities. Offering definitions and categorisation from the University of Birmingham's collections as examples, Hamilton's typology of university collections provided the university museum sector with a clearer position, but invited further research (Kozak, 2007: 13).

Since the 1990s, there has also been a marked increase in material published in professional museum journals (e.g. *Curator*, *Museums Journal*, *Museum News*, and *Museum International*). Arguably, the *leitmotif* throughout this literature has been the issue of the role and purpose of university collections and museums (e.g. Black, 1984; Hamilton, 1995; Kinsey, 1966), and likewise, the role of university art collections and galleries (e.g. Hill, 1966; Jones, 1967; Lourenço, 2005: 89; Zeller, 1985).

The common theme in the available literature has been the so-called ‘triple mission’ attributed to university collections, which combines the imperatives of the university, *education* and *research*, with a third; *public display*. Two doctoral dissertations, specifically addressing the functions of university collections, include Lourenço’s influential text, ‘Between Two Worlds: the distinct nature and contemporary significance of university museums and collections in Europe’ (2005), and Zenobia Kozak’s invaluable contribution, ‘Promoting the Past, Preserving the Future: British university heritage collections and identity marketing’ (2007).

Lourenço’s dissertation provides a comprehensive survey of past and present knowledge of European university collections by elaborating on Hamilton’s typological exercise. She also draws on the legacy of the cultural and social role of university museum-collections in order to point out that the ‘third mission’ of *public display* involves conveying the significance of university collections as resources for universities and for contemporary society in general. Kozak’s

thesis, meanwhile, concentrates on what she terms an additional 'fourth' mission of the university museum-collection, that is, the role of the collection in the formation of university heritage (Kozak, 2007: 22).

Universities are diverse institutions and their collections are unique, hence classification will always prove complicated (Kozak, 2007: 13). Typically, the reasons why universities possess museums and collections vary from country to country, from university to university, and even between the different collections within the same institution (Lourenço, 2005: 3). In South Africa, there has been limited scholarship into the history and role of university art collections to date. Some references to university collections may be found in the *Guide to the Museums of Southern Africa* (1978) compiled by Hans Franssen, which includes brief descriptions of the University of Cape Town's Irma Stern Museum, the University of Stellenbosch Art Gallery and Wits University's Gertrude Posel Gallery. In their survey of South African art collections, *Art Routes* (2000), Rayda Becker and Rochelle Keene also included references to a small number of university art museums.

The *De Arte* journal, published by the Department of Art History and Fine Arts at the University of South Africa (Unisa), has been primarily responsible for publishing articles on local university collections. Because of the inherent heterogeneity of universities and their associated collections, discussions around art objects at local universities tend to focus on individual campus galleries or museums and their collections. For instance, there have been various

publications by individual galleries on aspects of their holdings, amongst them a study of the four keystone collections at the University of Pretoria (Duffey et al., 2008) and the Standard Bank Collection at the University of the Witwatersrand (Nettleton, Charlton & Rankin-Smith, 2003) (Schmahmann, 2013: 13).

Brenda Schmahmann, on the other hand, identifies and explores commonalities between different tertiary institutions in South Africa. In her book, *Picturing Change: curating visual culture at post-apartheid universities*, she examines art objects in the academic space ‘not necessarily structured specifically and primarily for the viewing of art’ (2013: 13), as well as university insignia such as coats of arms. Schmahmann has pioneered the scholarship into local university art collections by introducing discussions about the complex negotiations required of local universities toward their inheritance of visual images and objects, in the post-Apartheid period (2009; 2012). While this thesis employs a narrow focus on the holdings of a single institution, it focuses on a similar domain to Schmahmann’s research, in that the art collection in question is not confined within the bounds of a gallery or museum. Instead, artworks are located within the academic space, such as the library or council chamber, or situated outdoors around the campus.

Concerning the University of Cape Town Permanent Works of Art Collection, specifically, Eva Franzidis’ Master’s thesis, ‘Hidden Treasures in Ivory Towers: the potential of university art collections in South Africa, with a case study of UCT’ (2007) proved to be a useful resource for information on the history of this collection, as it explores this university as a context for the exhibition of

artworks. As part of her research project, Franzidis undertook an internship with the university's Works of Art Committee between February 2006 and April 2007, and her dissertation offers the first and, until now, only attempt to record its history.

In considering the complexities inherent in displaying artworks within a university context, Franzidis' thesis is primarily occupied with the relationship between power and access. On the premise that the environment in which a work of art is situated will mediate the viewer's experience of it, her thesis opens with a discussion of different communal sites in which viewers might encounter works of art. In doing so, she contrasts 'traditional' public art museums (with an emphasis on national galleries) (2007: 2), with 'more public' spaces, such as parks, sports grounds and thoroughfares (2007: 113). Franzidis argues that the former are tarnished by elitism, and are influenced by the tastes and cultures of their curators, directors, and the powerful individuals (or corporations, or governments) who make up their 'insular and exclusive' committees and boards (2007: 28). Franzidis argues that they therefore privilege a select audience, rather than the general public. She goes on further to argue that public art projects, by virtue of their 'transparent and community-orientated' commission processes (2008: 28), may instead be seen as a concerted attempt to democratise the display of art, with particular relevance to the post-Apartheid South African context.

Franzidis argues that, while universities have 'inherited some of the conflicting qualities of national galleries due to the similar architecture and Western

heritage' (2007: 9), the UCT Permanent Works of Art Collection demonstrates a closer affinity with international public art projects than the art museum model (2007: 27), and cites the physical nature of artworks, the lack of a dedicated gallery space and the absence of an accompanying educational programme to support her argument (2007: 28). However, Franzidis notes that the administration of the collection by an acquisitions body responsible for the oversight and management of the collection, the UCT Works of Art Committee, more closely resembles the management practice of a gallery.

Through a historical overview of this committee, as well as an account of her experiences during her internship, Franzidis goes on to interrogate its representivity, finding it over-whelmingly 'white, middle-class, and middle-aged (and over)' (2007: 70), and advises a substantial transformation in representivity, so as to conform more closely to the demographics of the wider university community, indeed the country, and thus realise its positive potential (2007: 40). Franzidis also remarks upon the absence of any associated curriculum with the university's art collection, and invokes public participation and the educational role of the museum, in opposition to its aesthetic function, as a means of promoting inclusivity. She also advocates the incorporation of a sustained academic programme attached to the collection, greater public participation into the activities of the committee, and increased opportunities for discussion or debate (2007: 85). Finally, Franzidis concludes with a general survey of several South African university art collections, encouraging greater co-operation between local institutions, in an effort to establish that they possess the potential

to perform as alternatives to the traditional gallery for the education and appreciation of art, for the broader public.

Franzidis' analysis is significant in that it marks the first real, critical engagement with the university's art collection, pertinently addressing discrepancies in its administration and identifying the neglected potential of this resource to benefit the university community and greater public. However, while it claims to take as its central theme the 'complexities inherent in displaying artworks within a university environment' (2007: 1), it fails to fully engage with the specific history and nature of the university as an institution, distinct from both the museum and public art project. For instance, although Franzidis comments on the disassociation between the art collection and the discipline of fine art at the university, she does not address the paramount relationship between art and the academic project. Franzidis' thesis therefore invites a more thorough analysis of the particular history, nature and functions of the university collection as a construct, as well as the university's mission regarding the art objects within its care, in order to gain a more meaningful appreciation for the role or relevance of artworks within this environment.

For my study, it was therefore necessary to consult, first-hand, the unpublished material relating to the committee and the collection, including the agendas and minutes of meetings found in the UCT Works of Art Committee and University Senate Archives, which are housed in the WOAC secretary's archive at the Irma Stern Gallery and in the UCT Administrative Archives Department in Shell House, Forrest Hill, in Mowbray, Cape Town. Some references to the formation

of the collection may also be found in Howard Phillips's, *The University of Cape Town 1918 - 1948: the formative years* (1993).

Outline

Chapter 1 offers an historical overview of the university, and foregrounds the normative functions performed by its collections; from instruments of pedagogy to those of prestige and enculturation, or '*bildung*'. The first chapter also introduces the typologies of the first-, second- and third-generation collections, and the roles they perform typically in support of either the 'triple mission', as repositories for historical artefacts pertaining to the history of university, or as showcases of institutional identity, respectively. This chapter also makes the distinction between the entities of the *museum* and the *collection*, in order to offer a working definition of the latter for the ensuing discussion.

Chapter 2 traces the events which led to the establishment of the University of Cape Town Permanent Works of Art Collection, as well as the administrative body responsible for its care; the Works of Art Committee. It identifies the influences of 'academic drift' and an attitude of 'colonial deference' to the Oxbridge model on the formation of its art collection, and explores the relationship between the collection and the discipline of art production at the institution. The history and role of the committee are further elaborated in chapter 3. With reference to the mutual relationship between relevance and

resources, the UCT art collection is situated within the third generation tradition, in support of institutional identity.

Together, chapters 4 and 5 unravel the committee's responsibilities of stewardship, that is, the acquisition, preservation and curatorship of the collection. Chapter 4 further considers the art collection as an expression of symbolic capital and the consequences of an emphasis upon the immaterial value of the collection, while chapter 5 contemplates our understanding of the materiality of art objects, regarding the concepts of creation, preservation and destruction. Concluding remarks are presented in the final chapter.

Chapter 1 : Dismantling the 'University Art Collection'

Why do universities collect art? This chapter offers an abridged history of the university, focusing on the development of art collections, in order to identify the constellation of events and particular dynamics that brought the contemporary university art collection into being. This historical trajectory is significant because cultural forms and institutions are always pervaded by the configurations of the past, and the features of a modern culture are never totally dispossessed of their original, normative arrangements (Prior, 2002: 21). Rather, these features are simply reconfigured under new conditions and transformed to create new combinations. Thus, aspects which were once dominant in the character of the university collection may have since receded, but continue to maintain a residual effect on the present, just as emerging tendencies might one day prevail over those of the past (Prior, 2002: 21).

A general overview of the past and present custodial approaches adopted by the institution of the university, and its changing philosophies and relationships with art objects, should therefore assist in forming a clearer understanding of what makes the university collection distinctive. This creates a context in which to situate the University of Cape Town Permanent Works of Art Collection, and enables a more focused examination of its role, providing a greater understanding by which it can be assessed and valued by its parent institution. It also allows for the development of certain concepts and definitions which help to shape the discussion of this specific collection over the course of the thesis.

A Brief History of Art & Collections in the University

Ever since their collective formation, university collections and museums have suffered from a crisis of identity (Warhurst, 1986: 137). On the one hand, the role of the university collection is said to have been shaped by the evolution and role of the *museum* (Lourenço, 2005: 19). Although, rather more accurately, university museums and collections have themselves historically provided the reference model for other forms of museums and collections (Kozak, 2007: 43). On the other hand, the university collection has instead been most directly moulded by the pedagogical methods, research policies and strategies unique to the institution of the *university*. As Lourenço explains:

(...) [U]niversity collections are planned, built, directed, organised, expanded, neglected and dismantled by professors, researchers, students, librarians, and alumni. If the nature, history and modus operandi of universities are not taken into account, one is likely to find the complexity of university museums and collections overwhelming, the reasons for their existence chaotic and arbitrary, and their public performance well below standards. One can and should benchmark against the museum sector, but only once the nature and significance of university collections is more clearly understood (2005: 19).

The university collection therefore cannot be fully appreciated without an understanding of the institution itself, including consideration for the ways in which knowledge is constructed and transmitted in the different disciplines, and the roles performed by collections within the academic context. The concept of the art collection, in particular, has an enduring connection with the very

foundations of the university as an institution (Boylan, 1999: 43). It is generally accepted that universities have been informally collecting decorative objects and works of art since their earliest beginnings, and have accumulated collections to support their teaching and research missions since at least the mid-16th century, if not earlier (Boylan, 1999; Lourenço, 2005).

Unfortunately, we know very little in detail about the earliest university-like institutions preceding the *Museion* of Alexandria, although archaeological evidence testifies to their existence (Boylan, 1999: 43). The *Museion* itself, or ‘temple of the muses’,⁹ is considered an archetype of the university, as a venue for celebrating the arts, inquiry, and scholarship (Lord, 2006). After its decline, itself a matter of controversy, little is known about either the nature of the inchoate university, or the collections it may have possessed, until around the 12th or 13th centuries (Boylan, 1999: 44). Few historical accounts record the birth of the university, and indeed, ‘we only know that the contours of universities slowly took shape; they had become a fact well before being given a name’ (Haskins, 2002: iv).

The rediscovery and translation of Classical texts, including Aristotle, that had been long-lost, at least in the West, as well as a substantial increase in the dissemination of Hellenic philosophy and science, corresponds with the emergence of universities in several cities, including Paris, Bologna and Oxford,

⁹ The *Museion* of Alexandria, founded *circa* 290 BC (Lourenço, 2005: 51), was described as a large complex, including a library, lecture theatre, botanical garden, menagerie, and collections of portrait paintings as well as sculpture casts; it was a small integrated academia, a community of scholars.

during the medieval period (Haskins & Lewis, 2002: ix). Of course, it is difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish either a precise date or location for the origin of the university, as not only are the criteria by which we might classify 'the university' varied, but each institution considered eligible for the title was typically constituted through a number of events and processes, over a period of time (Lourenço, 2005: 51). However, the rise of the university may broadly be said to date broadly to 12th-century Europe (Haskins & Lewis, 2002: 1).

Universities, like all institutions, developed in response to a particular social need (Haskins & Lewis, 2002: xi); in this case, the transmission of specialised knowledge, such as medicine and civil law. Other forms of educational institutions, such as schools and academies of higher learning, particularly those for religious training, had existed in Western Europe and elsewhere, long before the 12th century. However, universities differed from these in that they were formalised, structured organisations; separate, secular and independent,¹⁰ created for the express purpose of educating individuals in particular disciplines. The medieval university represented the institutionalisation of guilds of masters in professions, similar to the 'European guilds of merchants, craftsmen, artisans, or mechanics' in the 12th century (Haskins & Lewis, 2002: xvii).

The prevailing scholastic atmosphere and the theoretical nature of medieval teaching did not stimulate the acquisition of collections (Kozak, 2007: 47). It is

¹⁰ Although the irony is that religion was the inspiration for the life and work of the university. It originated from the church; monastic schools were later replaced by cathedral schools, which then developed into universities (Haskins & Lewis, 2002: xii).

important to remember that the earliest universities were communities of students and masters, which preceded the rise of the independent nation-state and were often intentionally, potentially mobile (Bender, 1988: 16). For this reason, they typically did not possess permanent buildings for either administration or teaching (Pedersen, 1997: 211).

Within these early medieval universities, pedagogy took the form of the *lectio-disputatio* model (Lourenço, 2003: 19). Classes opened with the reading of officially-sanctioned texts, accompanied by comments from the lecturer: the *lectio*. This would then be followed by the *disputatio*: an oral debate wherein specific cases were discussed, with constant reference to the authoritative texts, in order to establish, sustain or refute a given thesis. Within this framework, there was little need for collections. Instead, characteristic of the period was a fascination with the rare, the unusual, the wonderful and the miraculous, which were favoured over direct observation and experimentation (Lourenço, 2003: 18). However, despite the lack of material collections, there is evidence that certain objects such as musical, optical and astronomical instruments may have been used in the medieval university for practical purposes, aiding in demonstrations or the transmission of ideas (Lourenço, 2003: 19).

By 1500, however, most universities had acquired academic buildings; lecture rooms, halls, libraries, chapels and lodgings for students and teachers, which were necessary to accommodate the accrual of movable property and other articles of value (Gieysztor, 1992: 139). As Patrick Boylan has noted:

Almost certainly the first collections of artefacts to be built up by the new universities would have fallen into two categories: religious and ceremonial objects and works of art, especially portraits of patrons and others associated with the institution (1999: 44).

From the beginning, the character of each of these early universities was expressed visually through the use of costumes, objects, insignia and ceremonies (Gieysztor, 1992: 139). Prior to the introduction of object-based teaching collections, these collections may have comprised archives, commemorative objects, manuscripts, and in due course, printed books, as well as portraits and items of 'sacred art' (Lourenço, 2005:63). However, the deliberate acquisition of *artworks* would not have been for teaching purposes. Early troves of artworks within the university would therefore have performed a role other than the didactic; it would be a reasonable assumption that their function was more analogous to that of contemporary 'noble cabinets' (Lourenço, 2005: 63).

Because the medieval university had grown to meet the need for specialised professional education, humanistic learning was largely neglected until the Renaissance (Haskins & Lewis, 2002: xiii). Within the medieval manifestation of the university, classical education grouped the seven liberal arts disciplines into the *trivium* (logic, grammar and rhetoric) and the *quadrivium* (music, arithmetic, geometry, together with astronomy). This division is Aristotelian, a principle of separation based according to the nature of the matter to be studied (Readings, 1996: 56).¹¹ Here, the Greek term for *art* (as well as its Latin equivalent), do not

¹¹ It did not draw a distinction between the Arts (or 'Humanities'), and the Sciences, as it does now. Only in 1848 did the University of Turin first separate the Faculty of Sciences and

denote ‘fine art’ as we would interpret it in its modern sense. Rather, *art* was applied in opposition to *nature*, and denoted a wide range of human activity, principally in reference to the sciences. Furthermore, these arts were considered to be knowledge-based skills, that were able to be taught and learned (Kristeller, 1951: 498-499).

However, the visual and plastic arts, while ‘teachable’ (considered instead as crafts, skills or trades), were not counted amongst them (MacDonald, 1970: 17). The visual arts were classified alongside baking, leatherwork and tailoring, and were considered amongst the lowlier professions, more humble than agriculture or hunting. In the Western context, a vocation in the visual arts would instead have been pursued through an apprenticeship system. Like other tradesmen, artists were perceived as purveyors of products, which were fabricated from raw materials and transformed through the ‘mysterious’ skills of their craft (MacDonald, 1970: 19).

Art education therefore continued to be regulated by the craft guilds, and later, through devoted art institutions, such as the academies (Efland, 1990: 2). The guilds were responsible for training an apprentice to become first, a journeyman, and then, a master craftsman who could then ply his trade. Meanwhile, the medieval student took instruction for his degree as a master of arts, law or medicine from a university, where the ‘tools of the trade’ were books and

Mathematics from the Faculty of *Lettere* and Philosophy, which until then had represented a single faculty.

manuscripts. Just as the medieval guild traded in objects and skill, the medieval university traded in knowledge (Haskins & Lewis, 2002: xix).

Thus works of art were initially perceived as singular objects of value to adorn walls of majestic rooms, chapels and colleges, whilst simultaneously projecting a desired image of social status, so as to cultivate the idea of prestige (Lourenço, 2005: 63). The earliest collections in fact originated from treasure archives containing commemorative objects and artworks, used for university ceremony and decoration (Gieysztor, 1992: 138-139).

From the isolated examples of objects in the medieval universities, their Renaissance counterparts assembled vast collections of models, maquettes, casts, reproductions, as well as objects such as specimens and instruments. These were used as aids to illustrate, demonstrate and explain, forming the first teaching collections. The first intentional art collection in a university of this kind is most likely to have been that of the Picture Gallery at Christ Church College, University of Oxford, originally founded in 1546 (Boylan, 1999: 44). In 1765, General John Guise bequeathed approximately 1,800 Old Master drawings and 200 paintings (principally 14th and 15th century Italian artworks), to his former college. The collection, supplemented by later gifts, was housed in the Lower Library and enabled Christ Church to introduce art into Oxford education.

The *Musaeum Ashmoleanum*, also at Oxford University, was made available for display to the general public for the first time in 1683, and is generally

recognised as the antecedent of both the modern museum and the art gallery. The Ashmolean has been widely accepted as the first university museum in a recognisable modern form (Lourenço, 2005: 65), and its revival of the word *museum* is responsible for the modern understanding now associated with it. That is, it was permanent institution, possessed collections, and was open to the public (Lourenço, 2005: 63).

The Ashmolean Museum was built to house the cabinet of curiosity collection belonging to John Tradescant the Elder and his son, inherited and brought together by Elias Ashmole. The so-called 'Tradescant's Ark' (Davies & Hull, 1976: 7) was one example of the *Wunderkammer* or 'Cabinets of Wonder' popular in the 16th and 17th centuries, generally recognised as a fore-runner of the contemporary museum. These cabinets, whether housed in cupboard, case, drawer, shelf or panel, shaped abundant collections that served to suggest the infiniteness of creation, as well as the status and wealth of the owner. They brought together encyclopaedic collections; comprising both *naturalia*, objects created by God or nature, and *artificialia*, that is, 'man-made' objects (King & Marstine, 2006: 275). The specimens held within were intended to affirm the existing world order, through the construction of a microcosmic mirror of the universe, organised and animated by the collector as active participant. The curiosity cabinets explored what it meant to possess, and thus exercise control through the practice of collection and classification.

Collections of paintings and sculptures, however, were most frequently treated as a distinct sub-group of these curiosity cabinets, and performed a different function; the *kunskamer* or *galleria* of artworks were typically employed to convey the wealth, refinement and power of their owners, and may also have served particular intellectual pursuits (Abt, 2011: 121). Because such collections were in service to the reputation of their collectors, these private art collections were generally considered to be semi-public, in that visitors were welcomed for the purpose of viewing the objects and participating in learned discourse (Abt, 2011: 121).

At the time of its unveiling, the Ashmolean resembled a combination of *kunskamer* and curiosity cabinet. More than half of its collection comprised art, antiquities and coins, while the remainder consisted predominantly of natural history specimens. Writing of the founding of the museum, the Vice-Chancellor described it as, ‘a new Library which may containe [sic] the most conspicuous parts of the great Book of Nature, and rival the Bodleian’s collection of [manuscripts] and printed volumes’ (MacGregor, 2001: 127). In a letter dated to the museum’s founding, the first keeper, Robert Plot, explained the Ashmolean’s structure. The museum was divided into three levels; a chemistry laboratory was located in the basement; a school of natural history, along with lecture and demonstration rooms were situated on the ground floor; and a display area dedicated to the collection occupied the upper floor. All three aspects of the museum’s role were united under the direction of the ‘keeper’ (MacGregor, 2001: 130). This organisational structure, designed at integrating teaching (‘the

School'), research ('the Laboratory') and public display ('the Exhibition') represented a departure from earlier traditions (Lourenço, 2005: 66).

While many similar collections of rarities are recorded as having been donated to universities well before the 17th century (Arnold-Forster, 2000: 10), previous manifestations of the teaching 'museum' or 'cabinet' had merely referred to a designated location, where collections could be displayed for convenience or occasional display whilst teaching. These collections demonstrated no particular structure, and possessed neither a director, nor any appointed staff; in other words, they lacked a specific institutional mission or existence. The Ashmolean differed, not only by providing regular access for a wider public, but, more significantly, through the combination of teaching, research and public display, the 'triple mission' of the university collection-museum, organised under a professorship (Lourenço, 2005: 66).

Robert Plot, succeeded by Edward Lhywd, the earliest keepers of the Ashmolean, each undertook museum duties in addition to teaching and research within the university (Boylan, 1999: 46). This model continues to the present day across the Oxford University museums and in many contemporary university museums; in fact, the role and organisational structure of the Ashmolean has been widely replicated by university museums around the world (Boylan, 1999: 46). For instance, the Huguier Gallery, at the École des Beaux-Arts, which opened in Paris in 1869, included several display areas, a library and an archive, as well as an auxiliary anatomical museum and laboratory (Lourenço, 2003: 23). This

‘triple mission’ model constitutes the Ashmolean’s major legacy to the university museum.

However, although innovative, the Ashmolean collection did not trigger any substantial revolution in the idea of the university (Lourenço, 2002: 22). The fundamental objective of the Ashmolean remained the same as that of earlier university collections, libraries and archives; as an instrument in support of the academic project (Lourenço, 2002: 22). It was intended to play an active role in explaining, describing, and archiving the products of man and nature (Lourenço, 2005: 66). With regards to the Ashmolean, its chief legacy is that these duties were simply given a purposeful structure. Naturally, universities continued to assemble teaching and study collections, but it was only during the 19th century that the ‘triple mission model’ would flourish (Lourenço, 2005: 66).

In France, the French Revolution and the subsequent Napoleonic era heralded major transformations to the concept of collections and, by implication, the museum or gallery (Duncan, 1991: 88, 93). The Louvre Palace Gallery is often noted as the first public art museum (Abt, 2011: 115), and its origins date to Louis XIV’s removal to the Palace of Versailles in 1672. Following the Revolution, his collection of paintings and sculptures at the Paris court, as well as other confiscated church and royal property, were first opened as a public museum in 1793 (Abt, 2011: 115) and reopened again as the Musée Napoléon in 1810 (Duncan, 1991: 95). Although we now recognise that this event formed part of a broader cultural transformation, it is significant in that it popularised

the notion of patrimonial heritage, the idea of preservation *for the people*. This raised the question of *how* exactly to preserve and, therefore, to display collections. The emergence of the public art museum was intimately bound up with the development of democracy, as well as the rise of academic art history and new aesthetic theories (Duncan, 1991).

Owing to its development, the public art museum model appropriated, developed and transformed the central functions of its predecessor; the princely gallery. However, where previously these galleries had served to demonstrate the wealth and refinement of their owners, this desire for prestige was subsequently adopted by the nation state (Duncan, 1991: 92). In this way, the museum context converted the values of collections from material wealth and social status into a display of 'spiritual' wealth. That is, works of art became recognised not as monuments to their patrons, but rather as the products of individual creative genius by 'Great Artists', which emphasised a national patrimony and civic virtue (Duncan, 1991: 97-98).

This transformation was made possible by the new discipline of art history, which was employed as an ideological instrument in the structure of the museum environment (Duncan, 1991: 95). Art collections were displayed in national categories upon the walls of the museum's rooms and along its corridors; the heritage of the nation, distilled into classifications of individual genius. Visitors to the public art museum would follow a prescribed route through this 'programmed narrative', a particular version of the history of art that served to emphasise national pride (Duncan, 1991: 92). In addition, because the public art

museum was theoretically accessible to all citizens, art galleries served as demonstrations of the state's commitment to equality (Duncan, 1991: 94). The work of art, as public property, became a vehicle through which the relationship between the citizen and the state could be enacted.

The Enlightenment in the West and the establishment of nation states profoundly altered society's attitude to the advancement of knowledge, and hence affected the university's engagement with the collection. It also marked the beginning of an abrupt change in the concept of art in the West, from mere mechanical ability, to a subject worthy of academic enquiry (MacDonald, 1970: 23), and heralded the arrival of the first academies, as rivals to the universities of the day (Elkins, 2001: 8).

Art academies followed the pattern set by the literary academies, which had already been in existence for some time, after having become more popular and more diverse towards the High Renaissance, eventually merging with the late medieval universities (Elkins, 2001). Under the influence of Vasari, artists abandoned their guild associations to form the first organised academy of art, the *Accademia del Disegno*.¹² Established in Florence in 1563, under the protection of Cosimo dei Medici, it served as a model for later similar institutions in Italy and other countries. (Kristeller, 1951: 514; MacDonald, 1970: 24). For instance, in 1666, Colbert (minister to Louis XIV), established the *Académie de France* in Rome after the same tradition, to compare with the structured French academy

¹² The term *arti del disegno*, from which *Beaux Arts* is derived¹², was first coined by Vasari, who used it as the guiding concept for his famous collection of biographies (Kristeller, 1951: 514)

of literature, the *Académie Française* (MacDonald, 1970: 25). Thereafter, the 17th century onwards marks the ‘golden age’ of the schools of *beaux-arts*.

The teaching in the Florentine Academy was mannerist in inclination (Elkins, 2001: 10) and replaced the older workshop tradition with regular instruction, and included scientific subjects (Kristeller, 1951: 515). Painting, sculpture and architecture were introduced to the curriculum and assisted by direct observation, usually through the imitation of well-known artists. During this period, plaster casts became useful tools as objects of study in both sculpture and architecture. Art teaching museums arose to complement the demand of taught programmes and held collections of original works of art, as well as reproductions, maquettes, and pedagogical models (Lourenço, 2003:20).

The use of these objects and the introduction of subjects such as anatomy, life-drawing, philosophy and mathematics (including perspective, proportion, harmony, plane and Euclidian geometry) illustrate the academy’s increased emphasis upon mental principles, in connection with manual dexterity (Elkins, 2001: 10). In essence, they strived for a balance wrought between theory and practice (Elkins, 2001: 10). Along with the founding of the academies, and partly in close connection with their activities, there developed an important and extensive theoretical and critical literature on the visual arts. Thus the ground was prepared for the first time for a clear distinction between the arts and the sciences, a distinction ‘absent from ancient, medieval or Renaissance discussions of such subjects, even though the same words were used’ (Kristeller, 1951: 526). The rising social and cultural claims of the visual arts also led to an important

development; the three visual arts of painting, sculpture and architecture were, for the first time, clearly separated from the crafts with which they had been associated in the preceding period (Kristeller, 1951: 514).

Collections find an affinity with research in certain disciplines more than others (de Clercq & Lourenço, 2003: 3) and epistemologically, disciplines including anthropology, geology, and medicine, amongst others, share a comparative nature and incline toward the use of objects in the production of new knowledge and understanding (Pettitt, 1997: 97). From the late 18th century onwards, research collections arose in those sciences that required the accumulation of specimens and artefacts for the purposes of comparison and the generation of new knowledge (Lourenço, 2005: 63). For this reason, research collections flourished in zoology, palaeontology, botany, mineralogy and geology, as well as certain fields of medicine.

The object also acquired an increasingly significant 'documentary' value; it was collected as a means through which to answer a particular question, or alternatively, to archive the result (de Clercq & Lourenço, 2003: 4). Research collections were also appropriated by archaeology and anthropology in the mid-19th century, when colonial expansion into new territories and site excavations began to provide growing quantities of sites and artefacts for study. In this way, objects functioned as tools enabling 'the systematic understanding of the other' (Lourenço, 2005: 67), distanced by either space (anthropology) or through time (archaeology).

Collections and museums of art also followed a new philosophy and iconography which drew upon this natural history mode of classification and display in order to represent particular styles or periods. The obvious and 'irresistible' connection between natural history and nationalised human history (Pearce, 1995: 134) resulted in the principle of taxonomy gradually becoming linked with an understanding of stratification and Darwinian evolution (Pearce, 1995: 133). The chronological sequence was the visual manifestation of the rational progression from past to present, representing the continuity of the arts, with works placed in accordance with national schools and hierarchical art-historical sequences. The art collection had become irrevocably intertwined with the discipline of art history.

Once 'high' art was transposed from churches, temples and private collections into the public space of the museum, visitors needed to be 'educated' (Carrier, 2006: 11). Works were therefore often placed in uniform frames and clearly labelled (Pearce, 1995: 127), as the public were expected to *learn*, not just appreciate (Pearce, 1995: 126). The development of these collections demonstrates the ways in which organised material and its display were considered to constitute knowledge, with the corresponding belief that objects embodied distinctions which could be determined by rational thought to reveal the patterns of things (Pearce, 1995: 139). Thus, scientific advancements throughout the 18th and early 19th century increased the quantity and quality of collection-based research, while the modern university would place research and training for research at its very core (Lourenço, 2005: 67).

The idea of the modern university was first proposed by the German philosopher, Immanuel Kant, and was successfully developed by the Prussian lawyer and politician, Wilhelm von Humboldt. However, where Kant envisioned the university governed by 'reason', Humboldt was guided by the concept of 'culture' (Readings, 1996: 54). Humboldt was instrumental in organising the University of Berlin around these two key ideas, united in the humanistic tradition known as *bildung*.¹³

The literal translation for this fundamental concept of self-cultivation or self-edification is 'education' or 'design', which might also be translated in the English as 'enlightenment' (Olesen, 2009: 1).¹⁴ It is an ambiguous ambition which signifies the pursuit of knowledge and understanding in all matters pertaining to secular life, while also emphasizing the importance of human existence and culture (Horlacher, 2004: 410). Indeed, *bildung* represents a form of aesthetic education, a process of the development of moral character that situates art as bridge between the realms of nature and reason (Readings, 1996: 63). The ideological imperatives of the modern university were threefold; the project was intended to give the students advanced teaching based on research; the ability to carry out independent scientific studies, and thirdly; to increase the production of scientific and philosophical knowledge within all academic disciplines, so that

¹³ One of the roots of the word may be traced to the English moral philosopher Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury, whose concept of 'inner' or 'inward form' was translated into German as *Bildung* (Horlacher, 2004: 410).

¹⁴ But, because this concept is not thought to be adequately captured in the translation, common practice has resulted in the preferential use of the German word 'bildung' in English texts (Olesen, 2009).

students could act with dignity as members of a learned, cultured and academic society (Olesen, 2009:1).

The Humboldt model promoted the advancement of research in favour of the training for professional careers, the latter being the contemporary popular model at the time, and was central to Germany's intellectual and scientific vigour (Lourenço, 2005: 67). The idea of *bildung* was introduced at other universities from around 1850 and the Humboldt exemplar spread across Europe and the world (Aviram, 1992: 405). It remains, in many ways, the prevailing university model today. The university and the collection were once again intimately bound together through research, in imitation of the ancient *Museion*. Several European countries implemented higher education reforms that stimulated the establishment of study and research collections and museums (Lourenço, 2005: 68), and under these conditions, university collections and museums could expand and flourish.

In the Kantian conception of the modern university, the medieval academic orders of disciplines were also reorganised into three higher faculties of theology, law and medicine, based on their principle content, which could be pursued by free, rational enquiry. Philosophy (which included art), was relegated as a lower faculty; as its principle content of 'reason' was considered to be self-referential in nature (Readings, 1996: 56). However, disciplines such as the history of art, archaeology, anthropology and other humanities were steadily obtaining a scientific and institutional identity of their own. The 19th century saw the emergence of dedicated university art museums, and many art

collections that had begun as merely decorative were probably reorganised, to fulfil the function of teaching and research, and opened to the public (Lourenço, 2005: 64, 67).

For instance, University of Cambridge alumnus, Richard, VII Viscount Fitzwilliam of Merrion, bequeathed his library, a substantial collection of paintings and other works of art to his former university, together with funds for the foundation of a university art museum, and the Fitzwilliam Museum opened its doors in 1816 (Boylan, 1999: 49). From the first, the Fitzwilliam served the general public, unlike the great majority of university museums of the period, which were still primarily exclusively teaching and research collections. This strategy established a new and important trend (Boylan, 1999: 49).

The majority of university museums of arts and humanities were founded between 1800 and the 1930s, imitating the majority of university museums of natural history and medicine (Lourenço, 2005: 68). During this period, collection-based papers and doctoral dissertations multiplied. Objects, specimens, and artefacts were vigorously used in the classroom to illustrate and demonstrate, as well as aid with the explanation of concepts. Museums and galleries formed the core of university departments, 'quite often preceding them' (Lourenço, 2005: 68).

A new generation of university collections emerged in the 20th century, as historical collections were formed through the accumulation of objects which no

longer served to fulfil their original purposes (Lourenço, 2005: 76). These included specialised instruments, models, replicas and other objects that had previously been industriously put to use while in good condition, when they functioned for teaching and research in a particular discipline (de Clercq & Lourenço, 2003: 5). However, changes in curricula or new pedagogical methods often render certain objects obsolete for teaching. Shedding their former functions, these objects may come to acquire new meaning as historical material evidence (de Clercq & Lourenço, 2003: 5).

These 'second generation' (Lourenço, 2005: 76) museums appeared only recently, primarily because the nature of the objects and the mechanisms of their use would tend to result in a necessarily long-term collecting process. Once an object's research and teaching qualities have been exploited to exhaustion, the 'natural fate' of most extraneous departmental equipment and historical instruments in the university is either destruction or disposal (Lourenço, 2005: 76).

Historical collections also represent a distinct type of collection because they diverged from the principal mode that had been practised by the university as an institution in the past. Whereas university teaching or research collections emerged spontaneously in response to the university's pedagogical methods and were typically located in, and managed by, departments (Lourenço, 2005: 78), historical collections differed in two ways. Firstly, their genesis depended upon the conscious recognition that such objects, which have endured the loss of context, bear a collective significance beyond their original, intended use, and are

worthy of preservation (Lourenço, 2005: 79). Secondly, historical collections may derive from departmental residue, but in the absence of purpose, these collections often become disassociated from their former disciplines. Indeed, owing to the lack of an internal drive or any formal structures to accommodate and curate the historical collection-museums in universities, their creation is often catalysed by a commemorative function such as an institution's celebratory centenary event (Lourenço, 2005: 79). We may also include to this class of university collections those of university memorabilia and objects pertaining to the history of an institution (Lourenço, 2005: 76).

Although first and second generation university museums coexist on the university campus, they have distinct origins, epistemological processes and missions and were subject to different historical developments. With few exceptions, their paths did not cross until recently, as the trend of integrating first and second generation university collections only became prominent during the last decade (Lourenço, 2005: 82).

After centuries of existence, university collections and museums were faced with a 'triple crisis' of identity or purpose, recognition and resources (Warhurst, 1986). This crisis was, and continues to be, part of broader institutional transformations within both the university and the general museum sector. These intellectual, sociological, political and economic changes, initiated in the 1960s, mean that universities themselves have been suffering from a crisis of identity. The gradual disappearance of traditional discipline boundaries, drastic financial cuts and aggressive, market-oriented, international competitiveness

have all influenced the expected role of university museums and collections (de Clercq, 2006: 24).

As I have shown, the university museums and collections of previous centuries were deeply intertwined with the missions of their parent institutions (Morris, 2013: 7). However, as art history and other disciplines began shifting away from object-based inquiry towards a more theoretical approach, the university increasingly regarded the former as 'the antiquated scholarship of an earlier era' (Willumson, 2000: 16). The increasing competitive university market, together with a shift in the pedagogical use of objects in research has meant that second-generation university collections have increasingly turned to an alternative symbolic role, so as to avoid obsolescence and justify their continued financial support (Shapiro et al., 2012: 2).

As a result, there emerged a 'third generation' of university collection-museum from the 1980s, which integrated existing collections and management structures (de Clercq, 2006: 23). As the object focus faded with the shift in the academic research model, the relevance of many university collections canted from teaching and research to the role of projecting institutional identity. Many of these third generation university museums act as a 'showcase' for their universities and possess a stronger commitment to serve the public (de Clercq, 2006: 23). Collections have thus become closely tied to universities' character and sense of value.

In the contemporary university context, collections and museums continue to play an active role at the interface between the university and its communities, addressing both general and academic audiences. Many third generation university museums no longer reside within a faculty or department, but have become central services to their universities (de Clercq, 2006: 24). Thus, over time, universities began regarding their collections as not only significant for the purposes of instruction and research but perhaps even more so as essential components of a *university*, a shorthand that denoted an institution's worth as a centre of culture and 'intellectual calibre' (Rorschach & Semans, 2005).

The entity known as the university collection may still be found across the faculties, from natural history to archaeology, from the history of physics and medicine to anthropology and art history. In fact, its ubiquitous presence on campus might be compared to that of another great, quotidian repository of knowledge: the university library. As with the library, the collection's resources are used for the generation of knowledge, for research, and for pleasure. The library and collection do share similarities of history, presence and ongoing active commitment to collections. However, unlike the library, which typically services all departments, a collection tends to be a highly specialised according to discipline.

Typically, university museums and collections are still classified according to disciplinary criteria. As Lourenço notes, 'non-disciplinary and all-encompassing typologies of university collections are rare [...] (2005: 32). There are many

possible typologies of university collections, but all fall into two major processes of collecting in universities: either by purposeful and selective collecting driven by internal needs, or by historical accumulation.

According to the typology by James Hamilton, a university collection comprises objects possessing the following four dominant functions; ceremonial, commemorative, decorative and didactic (1995: 73). It follows that Hamilton believes that the role of the collection as a whole can but reflect the functions of its objects, and he specifically names the didactic function as that which differentiates university collections from other types of collections in the public sector. He states that, for curators, 'there may be only an inch between the 'decorative' and the 'didactic', but it is in that inch that we all live' (1995: 73).

Regarding university art collections, specifically, some commentators have argued that appreciation or 'pleasure' should serve as their foundational purpose, to which other roles (such as the ceremonial, commemorative and decorative), might be added (Giltrap, 2010: 73). In her dissertation, Lourenço identified five different classifications of art collection: historical, decorative, didactic, accumulative and research (2005: 40-41), to which we might add a sixth: de Clercq's 'showcase'. However, the holdings of a single art collection may fall into more than one category.

Firstly, there are those university art collections related to the history of the university, in the tradition of second generation museum-collections, which have

a documental value for the individual institution's history (Lourenço, 2005: 40). Secondly, there are those in the tradition of decorative displays, which are conventionally situated either in cabinets or public areas in order to provide a pleasant and inspiring environment for learning and study, and which simultaneously project a prestigious institutional image (Lourenço, 2005: 40). Frequently, the first category may overlap with the second, where historical collections are 'displayed for decoration in corridors, classrooms, libraries or auditoriums before an actual museum materializes' (Lourenço, 2005: 78).

The decorative category of art collection may at first appear to conform to the same approach adopted by the corporate art collections owned by private foundations, insurance companies, embassies or banks (Lourenço, 2005: 40). However, it is important to remember that this form of university art collection is, in fact, the oldest form of institutional collecting, thereafter imitated by private enterprises. Furthermore, corporate art collections are motivated not only by a desire for public recognition and prestige, but also by other concerns directed by a market economy. For instance, in order to secure business over the competition, companies seek to present the most favourable image to their consumers. Decorative, corporate art collections are typically co-opted to perform not only in the beautification of the environment but also to represent philanthropy, in a traditional or strategic 'venture' model (Garber, 2008: 103), and/or are motivated by a desire to deflect unwelcome or negative public attention.

Thirdly, we find didactic university art collections, which are usually associated with the disciplines of history of art, archaeology or the fine arts. In contrast to decorative collections, these are typically kept in a dedicated space, such as a gallery or museum, for ease of access.¹⁵ These collections are intended to be made available to students for the examination and study of either original works of art or their replicas, or for the purpose of exercises in writing or curation (Lourenço, 2005: 41). The fourth category of university art collection results from an accumulation of works of art made by students (or faculty members), which may form a historical collection over time. Often, students' artworks are the product of formal evaluation processes and may be archived for a given administrative period. These collections may be used for teaching purposes or as documents in the history of art; however they also represent material evidence of the process of artistic creation and its gradual development (Lourenço, 2005: 41).¹⁶

The fifth class of university art collections are identified as being in support of research, typically in other disciplines. For example, these might include collections of artwork used for teaching in the fields of psychology or forensics.

¹⁵ Lourenço also identifies three sub-categories here: a) collections representative of a given period in the history of art; b) collections of casts (moulages) or maquettes; and c) reference collections of materials and techniques (Lourenço, 2005: 41).

¹⁶ The KHPC, for instance, largely conforms to the third and fourth classifications. Throughout her term at the Michaelis School of Fine Art, Katrine Harries collected works from students, as well as retaining prints by professional artists who made use of the facilities. These were intended to form a didactic collection demonstrating printmaking techniques and processes, including drypoint, etching and lithography, and continue to be employed for this purpose in the teaching of undergraduate studio-work today. The impressions were later incorporated into the KHPC by curators Stephen Inggs and Pippa Skotnes and include works which have accrued considerable value as early works by artists who have since established successful careers.

Finally, there are those university collection-museums which exceed the triple mission, and are instead put to use in developing the so-called 'fourth' mission of university collections, as material heritage which contributes to the formation of an institutional identity. These belong to the third generation of university museum-collections and act as an interface between the academic world of the university and the greater community (Burman, 2005: 17).

More so than any other type of collection, it would seem that university *art* collections present a challenge to categorise by function. As I have shown, while artworks have been used in the symbolic expression of the character of universities from their earliest beginnings, the roles of their art collections gradually became transformed by object-based teaching and Humboldt's concept of research within the university, as the discipline of fine art gained status as a subject worthy of academic enquiry. The Ashmolean Museum first formalised the triple mission, through combining the imperatives of the modern university, that is, teaching and research, with public display; this endures as the dominant model in contemporary university collections today.

More recently, second-generation university collections have arisen to accommodate historical collections which possess a primarily documental value for universities, or which are related to specific disciplines. However, particularly amongst university art collections, the traditional roles of prestige, *bildung* and decoration are still in evidence, albeit to differing degrees, which aligns them more closely with the functions of the third-generation 'showcase' and the projection of institutional identity.

Museums & Collections

Almost all universities boast of a collection of some kind (Lourenço, 2005: 3), and the greater number of these specialise in works of art. In fact, art collections are the most common ‘form’ of museum found on university campuses (King, 2001: 19). However, this statement draws attention to an uncomfortable slippage within the available discourse, whereby the art *collection* is frequently addressed as a type of university *museum*. It would appear that the entangled development of collections and museums particular to the university has resulted in the often indiscriminate use of the term, as though the mere holding of a collection were the sole criterion for inclusion into the concept of the museum (Hounsome, 1986: 29). However, this lack of definition reflects a much wider ambiguity surrounding the role of the university collection (Kozak, 2007: 57).

While there is perhaps a historical motivation for a malleable definition that recognises the affinity between the museum and collection within the university (Kozak, 2007: 54), the divide between these two concepts remains ‘fundamental’ (Merriman, 2002: 74). Universities possess both collections and museums and both may include objects of value deemed worthy of preservation. However, the distinction needs to be made clear, at least at a terminological level (Lourenço, 2005: 20). For, if an all-encompassing approach were valid, university museums would then be considered to range

from the slide cabinet in the lecturer’s room, to departmental collections in the care of nobody in particular, to departmental collections in the care

of the most junior technician because nobody else wants the job, all the way through proper departmental collections with a designated number of staff to look after it, right up to proper university museums, as one might say [...] (Hounsome, 1986: 29).

Such a broad definition fails to account for this inconsistency and the conflation of the terms 'collection' and 'museum' therefore requires attention. While it might appear that within the context of the university, the history of the museum and the collection are intertwined, it is nevertheless important to remember that collections and museums are distinct entities and differ in two important ways. Firstly, the one is constituent of the other; that is, the collection may be found *inside* as well as *outside* of the museum or gallery (Lourenço, 2002: 18). Secondly, while museums are among the oldest public institutions within Western society,¹⁷ and remain a distinctive feature of the modern cultural landscape, collections *predate* both museums and universities.

Human beings have a habit of composing collections. People acquire, keep, and pass on objects to subsequent generations because they derive pleasure and worth from the experience (Tirrell, 2002: 120). Museums, as totems to this trait, later came into being as a means (amongst others) to maintain these collections, to preserve them for the future, and to interpret them for their audiences (King, 2001: 20). Naturally, the first function of the modern museum has always been,

¹⁷ 'Western' is a highly-charged word, particularly in the South African context, however it is intended to be understood in this thesis to extend beyond its perceived physical / geographical limits. Hall has argued that 'the West' is a historical construct which denotes a type of 'modern' society, an ideology against which people, places and practices might be defined (Hall & Gieben, 1992: 276-278 in Pearce, 1995: 40).

and remains, *collection*; that is, collecting is the process of its creation and the dynamic that brings the museum into being.

Collecting is the intrinsic desire of museums and collections (Elsner, 1994: 155), both aroused and driven by the possibility of imagined completion. However, the museum seeks to be a static whole, albeit blurred at its borders with the slow, incessant hum of new acquisitions and de-accessions. Often compared to the tomb or shrine, the museum resembles the mausoleum, not only embalming its objects, but also the very act of collecting. For centuries, museums have been tasked with the containment, categorisation, and safe-keeping of collections of such objects deemed worthy of preservation and ascribed judgements of value; whether artistic, cultural or natural.

Black defined the university museum, as opposed to the collection, as a ‘matter of institutionalisation and structure, but first and foremost as a permanent commitment to research, preservation and interpretation of collections for all of the university community, and, to varying degrees, for the general public’ (1984: 19). This statement emphasises that what distinguishes the museum, whether affiliated with a university or not, is its purpose or function. Furthermore, Black specifies that this involves a form of mediation between the museum and various publics. In the case of the university museum, its role is guided by its purpose; to avail itself to the university (Kozak, 2007: 55). If the functions of the university

are indeed considered to be teaching and research,¹⁸ then the university museum is in service to these concerns, and those of its communities. The function of the university *collection*, however, is less certain.

While collecting may be the thread that holds museums together, collections alone, even those available to a public, do not make a museum (King, 2001: 20). Contrary to common misconception, the current meaning and origin of the word *museum* does not derive directly from the Greek *museion*, nor the Roman *museum* or *musæum*, but rather from the 18th century use of the term, after the tradition of the Ashmolean (Lourenço, 2005).¹⁹ The Greek and Roman descriptors referred to a specific environment and its associated collections, designed around and for the express purpose of learned discussion and study. According to Lord, the *Museion* was more like ‘the forerunner of the university than an institution to preserve and interpret material heritage’ (2000: 3).

In effect, it bore little resemblance to that which we call a museum today (Lourenço, 2005: 64). While all museums may be said to share their most remote roots in ancient Greece, the legacy of the symbiotic relationship between the university and the museum lives on most visibly in the university’s museum. It remains faithful to the ideals of the Greco-Roman model, whereas the non-university museum adopted a new organisational paradigm in the 18th century (Lourenço, 2002). Contemporary usage has determined the word ‘museum’ to

¹⁸ Along with the desire to stimulate and fulfil the intellectual, cultural artistic and scientific aspirations of its staff, student and local community (Warhurst, 1984: 93).

¹⁹ Prior to this, the preferred designation used for an institution of this nature in the English language was ‘repository’.

denote a structure or institution involved in the exhibition and storage of historical and natural objects, and has despoiled it of its link to the principles of scholarship.

The collection is principally an expression of possession, of ownership. This urge to collect is motivated in part because objects that are assembled perform as part of a collection when considered to be components of a sequence. Walter Durost, one of the earliest authors on the subject, proposed that the value of each item in a collection is perceived to be predominantly representative or representational, appraised primarily for the relationship it is seen to bear to some other object/s or idea/s, rather than for its primary or intended function (1932: 10). According to the famous study by the cultural theorist Jean Baudrillard, every object has two functions which stand in inverse relationship to one another; to be *put to use* and to be *possessed* (1994: 8). Therefore, as the usefulness of an object decreases, the more it functions as a possession (Baudrillard, 1994: 8).

This introduces the distinction between objects accumulated for use, with a generous rendering of what constitutes 'use'; and objects held as part of a particular arrangement or setting. The concept of an imagined series or class thus determines the notion of the collection, and the objects contribute towards, as well as acquire significance and meaning from, the collection as a whole because of the perceived unity of its fragments (Belk et al., 1991: 180). Collections piece together objects that stand as metonyms and metaphors for the world they may refer to, but are set apart from (Elsner, 1994: 155).

Roger Cardinal defines a collection as a 'concerted gathering of selected items which manifest themselves as a pattern or set, thereby reconciling their divergent origins within a collective discourse' (1994: 71). The underlying motif in the grouping or reunion of objects may be 'desire and nostalgia, or salvation and necessity to construct a new system, complete and permanent, that will resist in the face of the destruction brought by the passing of time' (Mitroiu, 2011: 213). This draws attention to the role and influence of the subjective element in preserving these objects: the collector-curator that envisions the entity that the objects are supposed to constitute, and which selects objects to accord with this model. Joseph Alsop emphasised the agency of the collector in his approach, 'To collect is to gather objects belonging to a particular category the collector happens to fancy [...] and a collection is what has been gathered' (1982: 70). The labour of the collector thus supplants that of the object's maker or creators.

Nicholai Aristides further elaborated on this concept by positing the collection as 'an obsession organised' (1988: 330), whereby a distinction is marked between the possession of a collection and mere accumulation, through the imposition by of an order, or system, which typically invokes the myth of completion. An art collection, for instance, is partly predicated on the desire to preserve and order objects as exemplars of a specific human activity. As a result, an art collection tends to include and seek out representative works which accord with, and find a place within, the span across a pre-determined gamut of idiosyncratic attributes relating to the artwork (such as artist, medium, genre, geographic area, period of

time, or a combination of these). Simona Mitroiu writes, 'Any collection is based on a classification and, if this is the mirror of collective knowledge, the history of a collection is a story of the permanent attempt to assimilate and enrich the taxonomy and the heritable system of knowledge' (2011: 214).

Russell Belk and colleagues typified the nature of a collection as, 'the selective, active and longitudinal acquisition, possession and disposition of an inter-related set of differentiated objects (material things, ideas, beings or experiences) that contribute to and derive extraordinary meaning from the entity (the collection)..." (1991: 180). This inclusive interpretation accounts for the subjectivity of the selective and seeking collector, and evokes the concept of the sequence which produces a collection greater than the sum of its parts. It further recognises the collection as a result of prolonged and metamorphosing activity, extending through time. Perhaps the collection itself also enacts a process of transition, from collection to museum, where, at some critical point, change within the 'living' and changing body of collected artefacts is largely arrested and the museum begins (Elsner & Cardinal, 1994: 155).

The understanding of *collection* as applied in this thesis therefore refers to a logically-coherent system of documented material evidence, gathered over time through the activity of a subjective agent, and in the framework of a specific pattern or system.

Chapter 2 : Establishing the UCT Art Collection

As I have shown, the university is an institution which combines a tradition of teaching with modern research (Kozak, 2007: 177). Universities have collected art, religious artefacts and antiquities for reasons of prestige and social status from their earliest beginnings. They also continue to commission art to ornament interiors, buildings, and gardens. Both collections and museums of art may also have originated in an initial donation and later catalysed further acquisitions and the development of teaching and research (Boylan, 1999; Warhurst, 1984),²⁰ ‘with objects being assembled and collected because of the role they played, or [are] projected to play, in the construction and transmission of knowledge in different disciplines’ (Lourenço, 2005: 3). They have also collected historical and heritage material since the early 20th century (Lourenço, 2005: 78).

Exactly how and when each university developed collections is dependent, however, upon the individual institution’s pedagogical methods and priorities. Because all university collections are the products of university pursuits, formulated as a source for and service to the university; it follows that university collections and museums reflect their parent institution. And, because all

²⁰ The use of the terms ‘research’ and ‘teaching’ is a terminological problem which affects the museum sector, particularly university collection-museums (Lourenço, 2005). These terms require further clarification, ‘as university museums are likely to use the terms ‘research’ and ‘teaching’ often with a different meaning than the museum sector in general’ (Lourenço 2005: 30). Unless otherwise stated, the terms ‘research’ or ‘research collection’ are used to mean discipline-based research, or ‘the deliberate and hypothesis-driven activity that enhances disciplinary knowledge’ (Lourenço 2005: 30).

universities have collections but every university is different, it can be inferred that collections differ from institution to institution (Kozak, 2007: 60).

This chapter introduces the University of Cape Town and the twin conception and incubation of both its department of Fine Art and Permanent Works of Art Collection. The narrative of the early history and development of this particular university art collection unravels the influences which shaped the formation of its identity.

Identity & Inheritance

On the 1st of October, 1829, the South African College (SAC) was inaugurated as a private high school for boys at a bilingual (English and Afrikaans) service held at the Groote Kerk in Cape Town. Eighty-nine years later, on the 2nd of April, 1918, a second ceremony was held, and university status was conferred upon this same SAC, which had by this time evolved into a co-educational university college, and came to bear the title of the University of Cape Town (UCT) (Phillips, 1993: 1). The university collection-museum was a model for many previously colonised nations because they followed in certain European traditions, particularly with respect to education, and this was certainly the case for UCT.

As a 'modern' university within the former Cape colony of the British Empire, both the recently unified South Africa²¹ and UCT continued to demonstrate close economic and cultural ties to Britain. Brenda Schmahmann has noted the particularly enduring influence of the Oxbridge model on some South African universities, which emerged as the preferred paradigm at the turn of the 20th century (2009: 17). The dominance of the Oxbridge approach had resulted in what is known as 'academic drift' (Barnes, 1996: 271) whereby newer institutions were susceptible to follow the curriculum and academic style of elite institutions, such as the ancient English universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

In the case of UCT, I would argue that this phenomenon was compounded by an attitude of what Jillian Carman terms 'colonial philistinism' or 'deference' (Maylam, 2007: 70). With reference to the making of the Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG), Carman suggests that early twentieth-century South Africa was characterised by an 'inferiority complex' (Maylam, 2007:70), with a constant focus on Britain as the point of cultural, economic and political reference (Carman, 2006: 36). The cultural artefacts of European civilization were therefore admired and adopted in order to assert British cultural superiority, as well as to refine the local community's taste and aesthetic sensibility.

In the wake of the South African War, Lord Alfred Milner, the British High Commissioner, promoted 'English-style' education as part of a policy of Anglicisation that was intended to 'reconstruct' the country along deliberately

²¹ On the 31st of May 1910, the Union of South Africa was formed, under British dominion.

imperialist lines (Maylam, 2005: 14). This had a lasting impact on those universities which chose to maintain English as their exclusive language of instruction and communication, including the University of Cape Town (Schmahmann, 2013: 23). Even though UCT was inaugurated nine years after the political unification of the four South African colonies in 1910, and was intended to encourage the reconciliation between English- and Afrikaans-speaking (white) South Africans through its student body, a Liberal-English epistemology still served to embed the institution culturally in the traditions of colonial Britain (Schmahmann, 2013: 23).

The English universities of Oxford and Cambridge had served as a standard regarding the European university and differed from the medieval or Renaissance archetype in the elevated role that they accorded the Liberal Arts. In addition, their collections of art objects had become synonymous with their *institutional identity*. Identity is not an 'essence' that is translated into a set of visual traits; it is instead a negotiated construct resulting from multiple positions regarding the social, cultural and political conditions which contain it.

Ever since the university's medieval foundation, its external image had found expression through its built and material heritage (Kozak, 2007: 109). The architecture, art collections and libraries of universities served not only an academic purpose, but also distinguished certain institutions for their prestigious holdings and exemplary built environment (Kozak, 2007: 109). These objects and collections became embedded into the everyday fabric of the university, 'as much a part of its identity as the scholars and scholarship they contributed to' (Kozak,

2007: 109). In this tradition, the University of Cape Town affiliated its institutional identity with the Oxbridge model to acknowledge these formative associations as a part of its character and subsequent *modus operandi*, and in so doing, to illustrate an acknowledgement of its intrinsic value as a university.

Of course, as I have shown, the Oxbridge model had been subsequently and profoundly influenced across higher education in Europe by German-Prussian reforms, such as the *bildung* ideals proposed by Humboldt (Readings, 1996: 7). Historically, the origin of the word *bildung* derives from the word *bild*, meaning ‘picture’ (University of Oslo [Humanities Studies in Education], 2011). This was first appropriated to represent the Christian concept of mankind created in God’s ‘image’, and later came to be associated with the German enlightenment concept. James Elkins has observed that the university art collection promotes a certain kind of aesthetic education, reflecting that *bildung* metaphorically ‘polishes a person by making him into a picture’ (Elkins, 2002: 68).

In this sense, *bildung* presupposes a self and a world in which the self strives toward expressing and developing its individuality (University of Oslo [Humanities Studies in Education], 2011). This approach emphasised reason and culture as the foundations for the modern university, and sought to mould not only a university ‘community’ but also ‘national citizens’ (Beverungen, Dunne & Sørensen, 2008: 233). In the Anglo-American sphere, *bildung* was tied to the seven liberal arts, and an educated person was expected to possess knowledge and judgement exceeding one’s mere profession, and to attain a general ‘cultural

literacy' (Elkins, 2002: 68), cultivated through the study of the fine arts such as literature, theatre, visual arts, and music. In the modern university, these objectives were provided for, and symbolised by, for example, artworks placed in the academic surroundings.

The University of Cape Town, seeking to establish itself as a university in the normative European tradition naturally attempted to emulate aspects of England's most eminent universities, and pursued the *bildung* aspirations of the German school. Thus, even before the University of Cape Town had acquired a single work of art, the institution had already inherited a certain system of values which would go on to influence its strategies of patronage, and guide its projection of institutional value through the use of visual symbols, such as the commissioning of leaders' portraits and the possession of artworks.

The Nascent Collection

At UCT, the foundations of the permanent collection are, in fact, entangled with the establishment of the discipline of visual art itself. The fledgling university began its curious collection of art 'treasures' with little else besides portraits and historical works inherited from the South African College (such as *Group of Professors* presented by students in 1893),²² as well as several botanical

²² *Catalogue of the University's Art Treasures* (1979) by George and Nora Keast, Works of Art Committee Archive. All WOAC Minutes, agendas and memoranda, etc. referred to in this chapter can be found in either the WOAC Archive, housed in the UCT Administrative Archive,

illustrations, portraits, and paintings that had been donated as part of an early bequest from noted botanist, Dr Harry Bolus, in 1911.²³ This *ad hoc* acquisition strategy would characterise the collection for some time. However, it proves not to be dissimilar to the way in which many university collections are formed.

Collections are inherently acquisitive; the very act of collecting manifests a *desire* to gather *more of something* (Belk et al., 1991 : 180 [own emphasis]). Collecting is therefore dependent on a context of acquisition and principles of organisation and categorisation (Kingsley, 2007: 16); the activity of collecting is deliberate; neither casual, nor accidental. It differs from the mere hoarding or accumulation of objects by the degree of both obsession and organisation. However, a collection need not necessarily be intentional from inception (Belk, 1994: 317), and it would appear that many collections begin without conscious intent. Objects may spend time serving as part of a miscellaneous accumulation before their ‘potential collectionhood’ is recognised (Pearce, 1995: 21). Certainly, gifts may act as a seed around which collections accrue.

The earliest contributions that may be retroactively ascribed as significant to the creation of what would later become the university’s Permanent Art Collection

Meulenhof, Main Road, Mowbray, Cape Town or the WOAC’s secretary’s personal archive located at the Irma Stern Museum.

²³ Bolus (1834 - 1911), was an amateur botanist who devoted much of his life to finding, classifying and cataloguing the flora of the Western Cape. He bequeathed his herbarium and botanical library to the university upon his death (Fransen, 1978: 39-40). These included type specimens of flora (one of the largest herbaria in the Southern Hemisphere), a substantial library of botanical books dating back to the early 17th Century, a number of botanical illustrations and other, non-botanical artworks linked to Harry Bolus. These are now all housed at UCT as collections, which have been expanded upon in subsequent years (Archive and Curatorship (ARC), University of Cape Town, 2012).

were gifts from local art connoisseur and educationist, Monsignor Frederick Charles Kolbe, in 1925 (Franzidis, 2007: 42). Kolbe had been appointed to the position of Reader in Aesthetics in 1921, in order to give a course of public lectures on *Aesthetics and Art*. This programme had been designed to introduce gradually the subject of fine art to UCT, after Sir Max Michaelis pledged the amount of £20 000 to the UCT Development Fund in 1920, specifically for the founding of a chair of Fine Art at the new university (Phillips, 1993: 39).²⁴

A year later, encouraged by the success of Kolbe's lectures, the university initiated negotiations to amalgamate the Cape Town School of Art, an existing institution, with UCT. The intention was to transform it from a simple drawing school into a Faculty of Fine Art under a professorship, a marked divergence from the Oxbridge approach, and for which the English 'Slade School' at London University offered the 'only precedent' at this time (Phillips, 1993: 39).

In 1868, Felix Joseph Slade, British lawyer and art connoisseur, had bequeathed his art collection and substantial fortune to his country for the founding of chairs of fine art at Oxford, Cambridge and the University College, London. An additional sum of £10 000 was bequeathed to endow six scholarships in fine art; John Ruskin was appointed at Oxford, Matthew Digby Wyatt at Cambridge and Edward Poynter at London. University College contributed to the foundation of the school, which opened in 1871 (MacDonald, 1970: 269) and soon established itself as the 'Slade'. It set a new standard in Fine Art education, particularly in

²⁴ Michaelis was awarded an honorary doctorate for his contribution.

terms of technical proficiency, and approached the concepts of drawing, anatomy and history with renewed seriousness (MacDonald, 1970: 269).

William Henry Bell, principal of the South African College of Music and teaching at UCT, noted that advocates of the 'older English type' of university among the faculty perceived the scheme to adopt the Slade model as 'iconoclastic and revolutionary' (Phillips, 1993: 39). However, amidst financial constraints, the university was compelled to withdraw its promise of a new faculty and elected to appoint a single professor instead. In another twist of fate, UCT's first choice for the chair was reluctant to accept, and the 29 subsequent applicants were not deemed suitable for the post. A special committee of eminent English art scholars was appointed in late 1924 in order to nominate a candidate and, finally, in February 1925, John Wheatley, who had both studied and taught at the Slade School,²⁵ was proposed to the Michaelis chair of Fine Art (Phillips, 1993: 39).

By this time, the scheme to absorb the Cape Town School of Art had been revived, but financial woes brought further delays. The school was formally taken over on the 1st of October 1925, and Wheatley assumed the position of Director, as well as his professorial post. The Cape School of Architecture, another independent institution, was also incorporated into the university on the 1st of January 1925. In lieu of appointing a chair of architecture, the school was entrusted to Wheatley, under Michaelis, in early 1926 (Phillips, 1993: 109).

²⁵ In the foundation years of the school, three of the remaining seven teachers had also studied at the Slade, namely: Grace Wheatley (John Wheatley's wife and teacher of painting and drawing), F.B. Craig (Mr Wheatley's assistant) and Eggy Withycombe (teacher of modelling) (Phillips, 1993: 43).

The new Michaelis School of Fine Art was initially located in the St. Cyprian buildings in Gardens and therefore operated on a separate campus to the rest of the university.²⁶ It provided instruction in three fields; painting and drawing; sculpture and modelling; and ornamental design (etching, embroidery and stained glass making), while the subjects of Drawing and History of Art were compulsory for full-time students (Phillips, 1993: 40). Two three-year professional qualifications were offered at the school, a Diploma in Fine Art and a Lower Secondary Certificate for teachers. However, these represented the minority of enrolled students, most of whom were ‘casuals’ taking individual subjects, varying from ‘housewives’ to ‘accomplished artists’ seeking to hone their skills (Phillips, 1993: 41). In 1929, Fine Art finally achieved full faculty status, largely thanks to Wheatley’s contribution to the discipline.²⁷

Following the appointment of Wheatley in 1925, Kolbe had announced his intention to donate to the university his considerable collection²⁸ of pictures, illustrations and books, on condition that they be kept together as a whole.²⁹ The

²⁶ The majority of the UCT faculties relocated from what is now known as the Hiddingh campus in Gardens, to Cecil John Rhodes’s Grootte Schuur Estate, or ‘Upper Campus’, between 1927 and 1930. In 1929, the Michaelis School of Fine Art moved into the former Zoology and Botany building in the Natural Sciences block of the Hiddingh Hall complex, now known as the Michaelis building. It shared these premises briefly with the department of Architecture, which was thereafter relocated to Upper Campus, while the Fine Art and Drama departments continue to reside at Hiddingh, the original home of the institution (Michaelis School of Fine Art, c.1975).

²⁷ He was succeeded by Edward Roworth in 1937, when the university rejected both candidates selected by the overseas advisory board in favour of the ‘most prominent South African painter of the day’ (Phillips, 1993: 285). Roworth was, like Wheatley, a graduate of the Slade School of Art.

²⁸ Thought to number approximately 1 000 items, with an estimated insurance value of £2 000, at the time, about 1% of the university’s annual income. As a comparison, the relative purchasing value in 2010 would be equivalent to approximately £98 200.

²⁹ As stated in a letter dated the 13th August 1925 (Annexure to Council Minutes, 29 September 1925: 1246, UCT Council Minutes, UCT Administrative Archive).

collection, which he had personally gathered as a teaching aid in connection with his lectures on art, was approved by Wheatley and both agreed that it would prove a useful foundation for a 'teaching museum' in the department. Kolbe also offered to act as honorary curator of the collection, and outlined his intended duties as: (a) the completion of the classification and cataloguing of this collection; (b) the allocation of some works for the purposes of teaching, and; (c) presenting the 'museum' collection to small groups of students (University of Cape Town Council Minutes, 29 September 1925).

The gift was gratefully accepted by the University Council, on the conditions stated, and Kolbe was appointed as honorary curator of the collection under the Professor of Fine Art (University of Cape Town Council Minutes, 29 September 1925). However, two years after Kolbe's death in 1936, the collection was dispersed: the books that formed part of the Kolbe collection were placed in the care of the librarian and housed in the subsidiary library of Hiddingh Hall, the pictures displayed in two small rooms of the Egyptian Building, and the question of the appointment of a 'custodian for the pictures' was taken under indefinite consideration.³⁰

Another substantial contribution to the establishment of the university collection took the form of a generous gift bestowed by Mr Alfred Aaron de Pass, South

³⁰ As yet, the original catalogue of items detailing the Kolbe bequest has not been found. It would appear that after the dispersal of the collection, many of these objects were lost, stolen or misplaced, perhaps precipitating the appointment of Captain and Mrs Keast in the mid-1970s to compose an inventory of the university artworks (Franzidis, 2007: 43).

African businessman and art benefactor, on the 4th of January, 1950.³¹ The bequest included items of furniture, china, books and paintings. Included among the latter were works by notable contemporary South African artists; Irma Stern, Ruth Prowse, Terence McCaw, Nerene Desmond, Robert Broadly, as well as a water-colour by A. A. de Pass himself. These were gratefully accepted by the council, who anticipated that these works could form the nucleus of a collection of contemporary South African artists.³²

Bequests such as these have played an important role in the establishment and growth of the collection and contributed many pieces of great value. Indeed, the Works of Art Committee appears to have been called into existence as a response to a similar potential bequest, by Professor Charles Manning, in September 1977:

The principal has been informed by Mr F. C. Robb that solicitors in London were finalising the will of Professor Charles Manning, who was aged 83 and was the possessor of a number of art treasures, including some pictures by South African artists, which were of considerable beauty and value. The solicitors needed to have urgent information as to whether the university intended to display art treasures suitably in the fairly near future and was in a position to look after them. If so, the solicitors could advise Professor Manning to bequeath the treasures to the university.³³

³¹ Other donations such as the J. P. Duminy Collection, Jack MacLean Bequest and Fourcade Bequest played a minor role (Franzidis, 2007: 43).

³² As per a typed inventory of the bequest, from the Deputy Registrar of Finance to Professor Neville Dubow, Director of the Michaelis School of Fine Art, dated 9 April 1974. (A. A. De Pass Archive, UCT Manuscripts and Archives Department.)

³³ Extract from UCT Council Minutes, 7 September 1977, WOAC Archive, UCT Administrative Archive.

The 'art treasures' referred to included a collection of paintings, sketches, wood blocks, prints, photographs, documents and other miscellaneous items by, and relating to, Sir John and Mr Charles Bell. The donor, Prof. Charles Manning, was the grandson of Charles Bell, who was in turn the nephew of John Bell (Bradlow, 1981: 16, 23). The collection is well-known for British pastoral scenes and architectural sketches, particularly Charles Bell's work in brush and pen, but also includes notable examples by John Bell, relating to the history and his experiences of the Cape in the 1820s (Bradlow, 1981: 28).

In response, the university expressed its intention to display the pictures, without having firmly decided upon any exact locations, but rather to examine suitable facilities where pictures could be displayed with reasonable security. The Registrar suggested the re-organised Irma Stern Museum, Jagger Library Interspace Building, Bremner Building Senate or Committee Rooms as possible venues to house the works, as plans for an art gallery as such had not yet been finalised (University of Cape Town Council Minutes, 7 September 1977). Rather than donate the collection as a gift outright, Manning then requested that a board of trustees be appointed by him in order to take custody of the John and Charles Bell Heritage Trust, to carry out his wishes in terms of restoration, display, research, publicity and so forth, with the provision that, when these terms had been carried out, the collection should be donated to the university (Bradlow, 1981: 29).

Manning's imminent bequest proved to be precisely the catalyst needed for the formation of a board to manage the growing collection, as the university council

directly appointed some of its members to compose a Works of Art Committee (WOAC). These included Mr Justice Marius A. Diemont (Acting Chair of Council), who was nominated as Chair, and Dr Frank Rosslyn Bradlow, a long-standing member of the university council, Chair of the Irma Stern Museum Committee, and who, not coincidentally, also served on the trust that administered the Bell Collection. Two further members were selected, namely Professor Eric Axelson (Head of the Department of History), and Alderman A. H. Honikman (Chair of the Board of Trustees of the South African National Gallery). Together, this committee held its first meeting on the 18th of January 1978. As well as these members, Mr L. Read and Mr B. N. Gaunt were in attendance, as Registrar and Deputy Registrar, respectively (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 January 1978: 1).

In this way, the UCT Permanent Works of Art Collection may be seen to have been established deliberately in response to a potential bequest. However, this took place within a context of ‘academic drift’ and ‘colonial deference’, in accordance with a system of values normatively prescribed by a European tradition of the university, which cherished the art collection as a form of validating institutional identity and building cultural prestige. Amongst others, the three significant bequests (each a quarter of a century apart, from Monsignor Kolbe in 1925, Mr de Pass in 1950 and Professor Manning in 1977), can be seen to have profoundly shaped the formation of the university’s collection, its custodianship as well as its composition. While the objects in the Kolbe collection had originally been assimilated for the purpose of teaching/research,

many of the other donated works did not contribute to this mission, but instead possessed a primarily decorative or historical value for the university.

In accordance with the tastes of its donors, the young collection demonstrated a preference for historical memorabilia and contemporary, local, (white) South African artists. This established the collection's content and invited the deliberate acquisition of similar or related material. Because of the university's early *ad hoc* acquisitions strategy, these works frequently lacked documentation concerning who commissioned or donated them, and when. Indeed, even some of the titles of works and identities of their artists remain obscure.

At the University of Cape Town, academic work continues to be performed in disciplines or knowledge areas that share close epistemological and methodological relationships. As demonstrated, the formation of the university's collection and its disciplines of fine art and art history coincided. However, the production of art and its study and appreciation appear to be perceived as distinct, and perhaps unequal, activities. Formally recognised in 1929, the discipline of Fine Art at the university meant that the training of artists became professionalised at the institutional level. However, the adoption of the 'Slade approach', which placed emphasis upon the production of art as an intellectual pursuit, was met with suspicion by sectors of the university community. From the outset, the faculty was geographically removed from the main campus and symbolically distanced through its being distinguished by the name of its benefactor (in the tradition of the Slade), as the Michaelis School of Fine Art. This growing disconnect between the discipline and collection is evidenced, for

example, in that the initial committee favoured the representation of the department of history over fine art in its makeup.

On the one hand, the dispersal of both the university's artworks and the diffusion of responsibility for its care set a precarious precedent for the university's approach to the collection for the future. The embryonic collection, which had initially been established in close connection with the discipline of fine art, had become separated from its former associations, and its role in teaching and research at the university was therefore diminished. In addition, the university's delayed appointment of a custodian following Kolbe's death, in the form of a committee, indicated that the care of art objects was not of high priority. On the other hand, the coupling of art history, or theory, with technical production in the fine art department, and the designation of an administrative body specifically to promote, expand and oversee the care of the art collection demonstrated recognition, to some degree, of the value of both production and consumption of art within the institution.

Chapter 3 : Role of the UCT Collection

Twenty-eight years have elapsed since Alan Warhurst, Director of the Manchester Museum, penned his *Triple Crisis in University Museums* (1986) in which he declared that university museums were experiencing a ‘triple crisis’ of identity and purpose, recognition and resources. Yet his description of the struggle of the university collection-museum still holds currency (Warhurst, 1986: 37). Once viewed as the ‘model’ of the modern museum, university collections have endured centuries of expansion, reconciliation and restructuring, leaving them bereft of their original innovation.

This continuing situation stems from the fact that university collections seldom have autonomous control over their existence or function. Instead, it is their parent institutions which ultimately provide the conditions, opportunities, financial and physical resources necessary for the successful foundation and ongoing development of their collections (Lourenço, 2005: 21). Because the availability of resources in a university is limited, a reciprocal relationship is often established between the resources allocated to a collection and its relevance or contribution to the university’s central missions. Thus, in the absence of resources, relevance will prove difficult to achieve and without this recognition, resources will be difficult to obtain and secure (Kozak, 2007: 153).

The unfolding history of the UCT art collection over the course of the previous chapter demonstrates that, despite an initial flurry of activity, the nascent collection was overlooked when the university failed to appoint a permanent curator and instead charged a committee of non-art professionals with its management. Furthermore, the collection, which had been donated with the intention of being kept intact, was dispersed. While the WOAC would begin to acquire and catalogue works of art for the collection, as well as to seek out suitable spaces for their storage and display, it would struggle to assert its meaning. In the absence of a dedicated leader or champion, it would therefore prove nearly impossible to argue for a share of the university's limited resources.

Relevance & Resources

In a fundamental sense, an art collection's primary resource lies in the works of art it holds within its possession. All functions are dependent upon these material artefacts, since there can be no study, no research, no conservation, interpretation, exhibition nor symbolic value, without the possession of the collection itself. Upon its inception, the most immediately pressing challenges for the Works of Art Committee were, firstly, to identify and document the objects which made up the university's existing collection of artworks and, secondly, to determine the most suitable method for their display. In the minutes from this inaugural meeting, the terms of reference for the committee were duly noted as:

- a) To examine, assess and classify the works of art and such other treasures in the custody of the university as do not fall under the management of a recognised committee, and to make recommendations as to their conservation, preservation and display;
- b) To recommend regarding facilities, including space, within the university for the display of works of art and all such material as naturally lends itself to display to the public;
- c) To formulate a policy regarding the commissioning, purchase and disposal of works of art and similar material and to recommend regarding individual works;
- d) To promote the acquisition by donation of works of art and similar material intended for display, and to advise council regarding acceptability of such works as are offered as donations to the university;
- e) To promote the display within the university and to the public of works of art and similar material suitable for exhibition that are produced within the university, or are of educational interest, and;
- f) To submit an annual report to council, and an annual budget via appropriate channels to council (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 January 1978: 1).

Of primary importance then, was the necessity to perform an audit of the contents of the amalgamated university collection. This exercise in the identification, examination and evaluation of the material holdings of the university would benefit the collection in terms of recognition, but would also provide the committee with a clearer picture of its responsibilities regarding the collection's physical assets, as per its terms of reference.

In fact, the first recognised attempt to index the collection had already been performed by Captain George and Mrs Nora Keast in their *Catalogue of University Art Treasures* (1975), which had been pre-circulated to members of the committee in October of 1977 (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 January 1978: 2). Captain George Keast (1902 – 1992), had been on the university’s Jagger Library staff from 1957-1972 as Stack Supervisor, after retiring from the South African Air Force in which he had served for almost 40 years. He and his wife, Nora (1909 - 2000), an amateur artist-turned-restorer, were actively involved with the collection until their retirement at the end of 1983 (Franzidis, 2007: 46). Together, they were chiefly responsible for the cataloguing and restoration of the works during the 1970s and early 1980s, and the couple attended WOAC meetings by invitation.³⁴

Documentation is fundamental to curatorial work, and is used to provide a basic source of information on the objects contained within a collection (Stone, 1992: 213). This information provides a fundamental and meaningful resource for the management of any institutional archive or collection, because effective stewardship relies upon the efficient identification and location of, as well as access to, the objects (Ericksen & Unger, 2009: 12). At UCT, the university’s various campuses and buildings act as the expanded repository for its artworks. In such a large, dispersed collection, a catalogue’s centralised records would provide a key to the physical artefacts for the purposes of inventory, conservation, publication and risk management. Monsignor Kolbe, for example had noted the importance of classification and cataloguing among his self-

³⁴ The collection even includes an oil painting by Nora Keast, *The University of Cape Town on the Slopes of Table Mountain* (1979) which may be found in the Bremner Building, Room 104.

appointed duties as custodian of the incipient collection back in 1925, alongside the responsibility to use his collection for the purposes of teaching and exhibition. These responsibilities were neatly coupled, as the potential dual curatorial roles of teaching and research are dependent upon the availability of comprehensive documentation (Stone, 1992: 213).

An acquisitions register refers to the preferred mechanism used for accessioning all objects entering a permanent collection. In the process of accessioning, each object is marked or labelled with a corresponding registration number so as to establish a relationship between the written records and physical objects (Stone, 1992: 217). Thereafter, permanent records for each individual item typically consist of worksheets and/or digital records that are devised to record relevant information in accordance with a number of demarcated fields (Ericksen & Unger, 2009: 19). In the museum sector, the 'data standard' consists of a prescribed format, a hierarchical organisation of data concepts, and recommendations for entering information into this classificatory system (Stone, 1992: 215). A number of these fields are considered mandatory or essential for institutional collections, including the acquisition date and method, as well as any records of transfer of ownership, if applicable. These details are crucial, as they protect the legal right of the organisation to the object's conservation, storage, display and disposal, and also serve to distinguish the items of the permanent collection from those on loan (Ericksen & Unger, 2009: 14).

Because art objects are unique, their records typically include a description and/or a visual representation of each work or its identifying features. This may

occasionally necessitate the augmentation of the record with a condition report, which identifies and accounts for any damage or deterioration requiring conservation-restoration, if necessary. Documenting the current locations of objects also serves to map the collection across time and space and, as a result, assists with tracking and retrieval. These records help to protect the physical integrity of the collection's objects by reducing the necessity to consult and handle the objects directly, and in the event of loss, theft, or damage to the collection, the catalogue entries endure as a permanent record of the original objects and may even assist in matters of identification, insurance and investigation (Ericksen & Unger, 2009: 14).

At this stage, the Keasts' rudimentary register or catalogue detailed the UCT Permanent Works of Art Collection of 'art treasures' or '*objets d'art*' and incorporated a large number of works of art, including even those which were judged not to be of sufficient value or interest for display (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 January 1978). However, the catalogue was not connected with an accessions register and the available information, including records of transfer of ownership, was severely limited, in part due to the complicated and fragmentary history of the acquisition of its objects. The art catalogue was also repeatedly interrupted by records of items of furniture and other items of historical interest, as the objects were not yet organised into categories, nor were the artworks distinguished by medium. This lack of structure was of concern, and the committee therefore requested that the items be ordered by a system of classification (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 January 1978: 2).

The Keasts' inventory therefore represented a hopeful but humble start to what should inevitably have become a complex and ongoing activity in the university's art collection. However, a comprehensive art catalogue demonstrating more exhaustive records was still required to enable responsible stewardship and to permit the Works of Art Committee, as the collection's custodian, to perform its duties with authority and precision. In so doing, the perceived prestigious profile of the collection would perhaps be enhanced, which would have a favourable effect on the university's reputation. More accurate documentation would also serve to enrich the understanding of each object's significance within the collection, and its parent institution, by contextualising their symbolic, cultural, historic and economic values (Ericksen & Unger, 2009: 12). A detailed, current art catalogue would therefore prove invaluable in guiding the university's policies of acquisition and exhibition, in order to create the conditions necessary to fulfil the triple mission (Stone, 1992: 213).

Showcasing University Identity

The first meeting of the Works of Art Committee revealed several contended items for discussion,³⁵ one of which was the desire to establish a policy of display. Specifically, a campus gallery was preferred in order to bring together and house this burgeoning collection of art treasures (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 January 1978: 2). The committee identified UCT as one of the few universities in South Africa without a dedicated gallery and the chair encouraged the matter to be pursued (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 January 1978: 2).

In this, the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) emerged as an emulous, rival, approach (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 January 1978: 2-3). As with UCT, the Wits art collection had originated out of a similar, small departmental teaching collection, initiated in the early 1950s by Professor Heather Martienssen, Professor of Fine Arts and History of Art (Freschi, 2009: 63). In 1968, it had attracted a substantial donation from businessman Norman Herber, intended for the acquisition of artworks, and which allowed for the substantial expansion of the historical and contemporary collections. In 1972, Gertrude Posel bequeathed a sum to Wits University, for the establishment of an art gallery given with a 'warm hand', that is, as part of a living trust (Charlton, 2011). The collection had originally been housed in the

³⁵ A number of the issues that emerged in this embryonic committee, such as the desire for the establishment of a campus gallery or museum, remain unresolved and continue to recur, leitmotifs of the committee's thirty-five year history.

Wits Department of Art and Architecture. However, in the early 1970s, a space was allocated to the collection in the basement of the newly-built Wartenweiler Library and, in 1977; the Gertrude Posel Gallery was established in Senate House (University of the Witwatersrand, 2013). There, it would continue to showcase an exhibition program of regularly changing student, contemporary and experimental work for almost thirty years.

The African artwork collection at Wits had began in earnest in 1977, when Anitra Nettleton, commencing her studies towards a PhD,³⁶ was invited to teach a course in African art (Freschi, 2009: 63). In late 1978, Nettleton was instrumental, amongst others, in curating an exhibition of African art borrowed from private collectors. This exhibition, coupled with a donation of works that same year by Vittorio Meneghelli, proved pivotal in founding the collection of African art at the institution (Freschi, 2009: 63). Initially, the acquisition of African art at Wits was regulated by a committee comprising representatives from departments within Wits; Fine Art, History of Art, Anthropology and Palaeontology, as well as from beyond the confines of the university (Freschi, 2009: 63). This committee concentrated largely on acquiring sculptures from West and Central Africa, as well as from Nettleton's field trips in Venda, to coincide with the curricula of various departments. The initial mandate was for the intentional acquisition of Southern African material, 'traditional' and contemporary works, as well as works spanning the spectrum between these two areas, the so-named 'transitional' arts (Freschi, 2009: 64).

³⁶ The first in South Africa in the field of African art studies (Freschi, 2009: 63).

In 1978, Wits founded a partnership between its gallery and the Standard Bank, initiating the Standard Bank African Art Collection (Charlton, 2011). This collection receives an annual purchasing grant from the bank, and contains over 5 000 items from across the continent (University of the Witwatersrand, 2013). The Wits Art Museum (WAM), as it is now known, comprises over 10 000 items, which make up the three major collecting areas of classical, historical and contemporary artworks, as well as many different sub-collections, added at various times over the course of the museum's history (Charlton, 2011).

Meanwhile, at UCT, a number of existing sites were suggested as possible venues for the proposed rival gallery, including the Irma Stern Museum, Montebello, Woolsack Residence, Glenara and Hiddingh Hall (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 January 1978, 2-3). Of these, the committee seemed to find the Woolsack residence the most fitting. However, beginning a long sequence of delays and debates, the committee was later informed of the University Planning Unit's decision that Woolsack would not present a suitable venue for the display of artworks because 'the size and scale of the rooms was not conducive to the display nor the serious viewing of art' (University of Cape Town Planning Committee Minutes, 6 November 1978).

Regarding the matter of 'serious viewing', a resolution was made at this first meeting for the creation of an informed Display of Art Treasures Sub-Committee, in order to 'select works of art for display and to make recommendations for the committee' (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 January 1978: 2). The persons nominated were

Professors Neville Dubow (Director of the Michaelis School of Fine Art), Anton H. R. E. Paap (Dean of the Faculty of the Arts) and Colin de Berri Webb (King George V Chair in History) (Franzidis, 2007: 47). Until the complicated matter regarding the establishment of a university art gallery could be resolved, the committee determined to recommend to council: in the first instance, that a limited number of paintings be displayed in the upper gallery of the Irma Stern Museum, and; that the question of re-housing the paintings presently housed in residences and other buildings be reconsidered at a later stage (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 January 1978: 3).

Save for the Keasts' inveterate and dutiful tending to the collection (Franzidis, 2007: 47),³⁷ the committee was otherwise dormant until its second meeting on the 9th of May 1979, some sixteen months later, by which time one of the founding members, Professor Axelson, had already retired (University of Cape Town Council Minutes, 9 May 1979). He was replaced by Professor Carel J. Du Ry (Professor of Cultural History of Western Europe). Meanwhile, the actuating agreement between the John and Charles Bell Heritage Trust and the University of Cape Town had finally been concluded, and the Bell Collection, with a preliminary valuation of R500 000, was placed on loan in the Jagger Library for an indefinite period.³⁸ A representative of the university library, Mrs Pam Stevens (Head of the Africana and Special Collections Division), was therefore

³⁷ The aging Capt. and Mrs E. G. Keast continued, in a part-time capacity, to compile and submit regular 'progress reports' and updates narrating events relating to the restoration of the university's artworks, the rediscovery / recovery of lost works, and general annotation of items in the collection.

³⁸ At present, these items remain on loan, housed in the Manuscripts and Archives department.

appointed to the Works of Art Committee (University of Cape Town Council Minutes, 2 August 1978).

The second Works of Art Committee meeting was held jointly with the short-lived Display of Art Treasures Sub-Committee and, once again, the question of a potential gallery arose and was discussed at length. The Keasts, in their capacity as custodians of the collection, had drafted a letter to Sir Richard E. Luyt (then Principal and Vice-Chancellor of UCT), advancing their own reasons for the establishment of an art gallery on the university's campus. In the letter, they express their disappointment at the university's 'lack of commitment to properly house or care for collection' which they saw as responsible for the loss and theft of many works, and which were otherwise banished to storage rooms which no-one visited, 'not even the newly-appointed WOAC members' (Franzidis, 2007: 48). They argued that, as a result, the university 'has become the poorer, both literally and figuratively; through not having a properly organised place for the display and safe-keeping of its artistic inheritance (...)' and that, 'these things are the very fabric of the university's past and a part of our wider heritage'.³⁹ Certainly reflected in the Keasts' letter is the understanding that the art collection was significant for the role it played in projecting a particular representation of the university's sense of self, and the artworks were recognised as a means whereby the university chose to represent both its *past* and its *heritage*.⁴⁰

³⁹ Letter from Capt. and Mrs Keast dated 7 December 1978: 1 (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 9 May 1979 [Addendum]).

⁴⁰ Both ordinarily highly problematic terms, but particularly as this 'wider heritage' referred to belonged to a precious select few in 1979, in the 'throes of apartheid', with white students making

As Kozak has noted (2007), ‘university heritage’ continues to lack precise articulation for those aspects of an institution’s culture maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations. In *University Heritage: an institutional tool for branding and marketing*, Nijole Bulotaite construes the term as divided into the ‘material’ and the ‘immaterial’ (2003: 450). By this, *material* heritage is understood to consist of tangible, physical objects and structures, such as ‘university buildings, libraries and their holdings and collections, archives, regalia’ and so forth. In contrast, *immaterial* heritage is often more difficult to define (Bulotaite, 2003: 450). The immaterial may include intangible concepts and methodologies regarding the transmission and development of knowledge in a university (an ‘intellectual’ or academic heritage), freedom of teaching and research, values and ethics of higher education institutions, as well as the various university traditions and ceremonies of the academic community (Bulotaite, 2003: 450).

Works of art belong to the realm of physical objects; they are therefore apt to function as cultural products or material heritage. However, art also belongs to the realm of affect, with the ability to evoke an emotional response. Through symbolic forms, works of art create and express meaning (Swidler, 1986: 273). The university’s art collection therefore had the capability to embody cultural processes through its material manifestation. This advantageous ability to project or interpret the intangible values and ideals of the university’s

up 91 percent of the overall student population at the university at this time, as noted by Franzidis in her thesis (2007: 48).

communities makes the collection an ideal vehicle for the transmission of institutional identity.

On the one hand, ever since their foundations, university art collections have performed as a form of conspicuous cultural consumption (Veblen, 2006: 115). By this, I mean that artworks are imbued with meaning so as to increase and confirm their parent organisation's status. This cultural capital is held most obviously in an objectified form in art collections (Bourdieu, 1986: 243), a conventional symbol used by universities in order to demonstrate their conformity with an institutional legacy (Wæraas & Solbakk, 2009: 453). For instance, the young South African university of UCT unconsciously patterned its art collection after a European tradition, as a means to lay claim to an established heritage of tertiary education. The art collection thus performed as a signal by which to identify and validate the type of education offered.

On the other hand, in the face of increased national and international competition, contemporary universities are no longer simply institutions of higher learning; they have also adopted the role of businesses. In all parts of the world, universities have begun to search for more precise definitions of what they are, in order to differentiate themselves and to attract fame, funding, donations, students and academic staff (Wæraas & Solbakk, 2009: 449). In order for the physical collection to act as a symbol for the intangible aspects of the individual university's character, in particular, it therefore needs to cultivate, embody and communicate those values and characteristics considered to be both central and unique to the institution's mission.

In its statement of mission, the University of Cape Town wilfully assumes its responsibilities as a commitment to:

academic freedom as the prerequisite to fostering intellectual debate and free inquiry; ensuring that research informs all our activities including teaching, learning and service in the community; advancing and disseminating knowledge that addresses the key challenges facing society - South African, continental and global; protecting 'curiosity-driven' research; *nurturing and valuing creativity in the sciences and arts including the performing and creative arts*; and stimulating international linkages of researchers and research groupings (University of Cape Town, 2009 [own emphasis]).

Allowing that the rhetoric of mission statements may serve a legitimating function (Morphew & Hartley, 2006: 458), and that a commitment to the arts has become a normative expression of purpose amongst liberal universities in the European tradition, UCT makes a particularly robust and idiomatic pledge to creativity in research and emphasis upon the arts. Until as recently as 1997, the University of Cape Town had a combined Faculty of Fine Art and Architecture. It is therefore to be expected that the university's built environment and material heritage might provide spaces in which the institution would inscribe its emphasis upon creativity in the arts and express this in physical form.

Architecture comprises unifying structures of mutual dependence and exclusion. In a similar way, *bildung* signifies the process by which the university's house or temple, its very buildings, function as a means by which the institution

constructs its identity and integrates the individuals of its community into a socially cohesive whole (Bernstein, 1999: 1015). If the university's pledge does indeed find expression in its built and material heritage, the university's Baxter Theatre, Michaelis School of Fine Art and even the Permanent Works of Art Collection may all be construed as embodiments of the organisation's various activities of artistic production which they accommodate. In this, they combine the innate prestige of art with the merits of possession, as objectified symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986: 243-5). This conceptual link between *bildung* and 'building' may be seen in the term 'edification'; from the Latin *aedes* (temple or house), and *facere* (to make) (Bernstein, 1999: 1015).

By embedding the artworks of the permanent art collection into the architecture of the campus, through the dispersal of its artworks, the university's art collection may be seen to contribute, not only to a general aesthetic education, but also to the construction of an overarching institutional identity, differentiating it from other institutions. However, for UCT, the desired manifestation of this mission through architecture, in the form of a permanent structure to house the university's artworks, still proved elusive.

Buildings are artefacts in themselves, created at considerable expense and reflective of the intellectual and material context of the communities in which they are founded. In the case of a gallery or museum, the building (or its articulation within an existing building) becomes an integral part of the collections it houses (Forgan, 2005: 574). The gallery or museum typically conveys authority and ornament to its home institution and lends credibility to

the collections within. In pursuit of these ideals, the committee entered into discussion concerning the 'showcasing' of UCT's institutional identity through the creation of an art gallery.

The UCT Works of Art Committee had already engaged in a certain degree of comparative analysis, and had also performed an investigation into the acquisition and display policies of its closest competitor, the University of Stellenbosch (US). Despite having launched a university museum in 1969, US also did not yet possess a gallery for the exclusive display of artworks. In this, the committee sought the advice of Professor Laurence 'Larry' Vincent Scully (Chair of Fine Art and Art History, University of Stellenbosch) who favoured and promoted the idea of a university gallery for both US, as well as UCT.

Along with the presumed internal and external prestige, a university art gallery or museum was generally argued as being beneficial to the collection in terms of: providing improved security to vulnerable objects; gaining greater control over the inventory; expanding the possibilities for the purchase and display of other forms of artistic production (such as the more transient mediums of video or installation); and the passive conservation of objects through a climate-controlled environment (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 19 August 1980). A dedicated physical space also had the latency to house the various works presently held in storage (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 5 March 1985), as well as consolidate various collections for the purpose of research and study (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 April 1989). Furthermore, the

combination of all of these factors was hoped to encourage an increase in donations of funding and artwork, as it was thought that opportunities for acquisition had been lost through the lack of a dedicated display area.

Naturally, the repeated calls for the establishment of a historical university museum, museum-*cum*-art gallery or art gallery proper on campus, also revealed an abundance of arguments against. Mrs Pam Stevens, as the representative of the university library on the committee, related her findings from a recent trip to the United Kingdom, where she had consulted with university librarians and archivists, and had come to the conclusion that a university gallery/museum should not be initiated.⁴¹ In debate, her arguments against included the lack of adequate and sustainable resources, storage, curatorship and funding, which would be necessary for proper care of the collection in a gallery, as well as concerns about whether such a gallery would, in fact, be visited by members of the UCT community.⁴²

The presumed advantage of the distribution of the collection across the campuses meant that users of, and visitors to, the university encountered various works of art as a matter of routine. However, while this dispersal benefited both the university community and occasional callers in terms of exposure to isolated artworks, it effectively excluded the public from access to the collection as an entity. Because of this, the collection's potential function as a means of asserting

⁴¹ Letter from Mrs Stevens dated 19 March 1979, Addendum to the University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 9 May 1979, WOAC Archive.

⁴² Ibid.

the university's institutional identity to an exterior audience could not be effectively realised; this role would be better served through the creation of an intentional university art museum or gallery.

Mindful of the gradual conflation of the terms, 'museum' and 'gallery' even amongst its own members, the committee sought to clarify 'whether an historical museum, a museum-*cum*-art gallery, or an art gallery was under discussion, and whether it would be static or whether additions would be made to it' (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 9 May 1979: 2). However, at the committee meeting on the 9th of May 1979, the ensuing debate does not appear to have assuaged the task of determining precisely the type of institution being petitioned for. Instead, the committee diffidently acceded that the university's decision to display works of art did not necessarily entail the construction of a devoted art gallery at all, but admitted that it was imperative for some areas to be developed for storage and display, in the meanwhile (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 9 May 1979).

The Irma Stern Museum, with its respectable status but waning attendance, was singled out as an existing site with enough personnel to support expansion. The development of a university gallery alongside the museum had the potential to attract more suitable gifts and bequests, and it was hoped that a display composed of both static and changing exhibits would be able to draw on two different 'publics' (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 9 May 1979).

The committee therefore recommended that the Planning Unit investigate the feasibility of creating an exhibition space within the grounds of the Irma Stern Museum, perhaps even acquiring the adjacent property on the corner of Chapel and Cecil Roads (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 9 May 1979).⁴³ In response, the Planning Unit drafted a report on the proposed *UCT Art Gallery*, in which it noted the suitability of the ISM and the adjacent plots as a site for the location of the potential gallery, considering them to be well-located for future university development as well as for access by the public (University of Cape Town Planning Committee, March 1980). It recommended that a modest start be made, as soon as possible, which could be developed into a more substantial scheme at some later, as yet undetermined, stage. Several plans were presented in the report, of which the final selection was dependent on the Works of Art Committee's ability to define exactly what was intended by a 'University Art Gallery' as well as the priority placed on this facility, particularly when seen in competition with other 'needy programmes' (University of Cape Town Planning Committee, March 1980).

Discussion in council regarding the proposed gallery space had urged the committee to frame a clear policy on the housing and display of UCT's works of art in order to proceed with the extension of the Irma Stern Museum. But, in response, the committee continued to vacillate over more minor considerations, such as ease of access to the future building. The Baxter Theatre was suggested

⁴³ As well as the feasibility of housing archival material on the Middle Campus for improved accessibility.

as another potential site, desirable from the point of view of its prominent exposure to the public, but the committee conceded that it was an exceedingly vulnerable area in which to maintain security. The Middle Campus development, in close proximity to the library and archives, or alternatively, the Hiddingh Hall complex, were both put forward as other alternative venues in which to accommodate the collection's many artworks, with particular emphasis on the latter's location in the midst of many other galleries and museums (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 July 1980). However, the meeting's proceedings brought the committee no closer to reaching a decision regarding its desired gallery.

On the 19th of August 1980, the Works of Art Committee met together with an *ad hoc* committee appointed by council to investigate whether the university was indeed making the best possible use of the Irma Stern Museum. At this meeting, the Works of Art Committee (endorsed by the members of the *ad hoc* committee) approved the recommended 'modest start' to house the permanent collection (costing between R150 000 and R200 000). It was decided that the construction would not take the form of an independent gallery, but would instead manifest as the linear gallery for 'pictures being viewed on the way to the museum', that had been proposed in the Planning Unit's report (UCT Works of Art Committee, 19 August 1980).

The committee acknowledged the university's custody over notable collections, as well as the likelihood of receiving the Bell Collection in the near future. It was understood that the exigency of a policy would need to distinguish between

which items were 'worthy' of display and those which were not (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 July 1980). With regards to the acquisition, commissioning, purchase and disposal of works of art, which lay within the recommended terms of reference, the committee agreed to recommend that the first priority be the purchase of contemporary works of art by South African artists, 'in no special category in particular'; and secondly that, as a guide-line only, one percent of the capital value of a building or construction be set aside for works of art (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 19 August 1980).⁴⁴ This shrewd proposal was approved by the council at its meeting almost two years later, on the 5th of May 1982 (University of Cape Town Council, 2 June 1982).

This seemingly minor event marked a significant and deliberate shift in the university's approach toward the role of the collection, as well as the responsibilities of the committee in relation to it. Acquisitions were made to be selective, in that art objects would be chosen specifically for their potential representivity as examples of contemporary South African art. In addition, one may also reasonably infer that the committee would privilege artists or artworks bearing a particular relationship to the university; as well as those which coincided with the subjective tastes of the individuals that constituted the administrative body of the committee.

⁴⁴ Percent-for-art programmes involve setting aside a small percentage of construction funds (typically 1%) to be used for the purchase of decorative art, for incorporation into the architecture of public buildings. The concept originated in France in 1936, where 1% of public building construction fees were set aside for public art. In 1939, a similar program was created under President Roosevelt's 'New Deal' in the United States of America (Lydiate, 1982). The strategy has since gained popularity the USA and Europe, and has become increasingly common on university campuses.

I would suggest that this identifies a substantial shift in the university's attitude from one of 'colonial deference' to an 'affirmatory approach', which no longer looked exclusively to Europe for examples of cultural excellence, but which instead recognised and encouraged a local artistic tradition. By placing its emphasis on the acquisition of artworks by South African artists, UCT sought to demonstrate its own cultural sophistication with modern artworks reflective of its status as a modern university, in a modern country.

Equally important was the prescribed emphasis upon, and financial provision for, the acquisition of artworks. The implementation of the one-percent guideline specifically encouraged the commissioning and purchase of substantial works for the beautification of certain sites on the university grounds. It was a decisive moment that both implied and entrenched the role of art as part of the character of this university, by quite literally integrating artworks into the infrastructure (University of Cape Town Council Minutes, 2 June 1982).⁴⁵ However, while the one-percent guideline appeared to prioritise the collection, this decision simultaneously compromised the potential for the proposed art gallery.

⁴⁵ In 2005, the one-percent guideline would finally be formalised as policy, 25 years after its proposal by the Works of art Committee (and 23 years since the guideline was approved by the university council). The minutes from the university council meeting on 20th July 2005 record that, finally, the university had 'committed itself to one percent of capital allocations for all future projects'. In its report to the University Research Council for 2005/2006, the Works of Art Committee was able to articulate its function the 'curation, exhibition and expansion of the University's public collection of works of art'.

University collection-museums compete for scarce resources against various other university initiatives, departments, laboratories and libraries, all of which are deemed to contribute directly to the institution's core missions of teaching and research (Kozak, 2007: 164). In her report on campus art museums, Corrine Glesne found that institutional structures and procedures contribute to varying degrees of backing for university art collections (2012: 12). A collection's position within the university, whether autonomous or as part of an academic department or institutional entity, directly affects how it is perceived and supported by its parent organisation (Glesne, 2012: 12).

Simply put, the UCT Works of Art Committee could not justify the channelling of resources and facilities away from other university pursuits in order to establish an independent campus museum or gallery, because it was unable to articulate precisely how the preservation of the objects within the collection might contribute to the mandate of the institution (Kozak, 2007: 162). As a result, the university failed to recognise the value of maintaining this collection in a publicly-accessible area of display, and the execution of the ISM gallery dissolved.

The University Council meanwhile adjudicated that a single committee be appointed in place of the Works of Art Committee and the flaccid Display of Art Treasures Sub-Committee. Professor John V. O. Reid (Deputy Vice-Chancellor) was nominated as chair of this new, reconstituted Works of Art Committee, and on the 1st of June 1984, Associate Professor Basil Alexander Le Cordeur (King George V Professor of History) was also invited onto the committee, after

Professor Webb was invited to take up the post of Vice-Chancellor of the University of Natal, retiring from the committee in May.

The first major project undertaken by the Works of Art Committee in its new capacity was to commission artwork for the Education Building (now the Jules and Wilfred Kramer Law Building on Middle Campus), when construction was begun in 1984. In accordance with the one-percent guideline, the sum of R100 000 was allocated to the venture, and the artist, Mr Andrew Verster, was invited to advise and assist with the process (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 2 May 1984). At a special meeting between the committee, its consultant and the architects, as well as representatives of the users of the building, it was decided that a sculpture competition would be held in September of that year for the purchase of a substantial work as a main 'vertical' feature, exterior to the building (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 2 May 1984). Over a deliberately extended time frame, a short-list of finalists would be reviewed in the first quarter of 1985, when the committee anticipated judging the drawings and maquettes received. A final design was expected to be completed only by the end of 1986. In truth, this acquisition process took much longer. The competition itself was never initiated and was generally acknowledged to have been a dismal failure, as the entries were considered to have been feeble.

Following the ‘Connor Cruise O’Brien Affair’⁴⁶ that precipitated the educational crisis of 1986, the committee abandoned the idea of a competition and chose to set aside R20 000 for a monumental work to be commissioned and erected when ‘academic freedom has been re-established in South Africa’. Eventually, Bruce Arnott was commissioned to produce a suitable work and *Alma Mater* was unveiled in 1997, thirteen years after the project’s inception. Minutes from the committee’s meeting five years later relate the meandering purchase history for this structure in detail (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 April 1989). Other projects that benefitted from the one-percent guideline over this period included the Zoology Building, Chancellor’s Walk, the Child Guidance Clinic and the Centre for African Studies,⁴⁷ with varying degrees of success.

One of the greatest challenges for any university collection-museum is securing and obtaining those resources for which the university as a parent institution is responsible (Kozak, 2007: 154). These include physical space (e.g. adequate facilities to accommodate the collection/s and appropriate amenities), funding (e.g. salaries, acquisitions and conservation) and staffing (e.g. management, advisory groups, volunteers). Without these fundamental resources, the

⁴⁶ O’Brien, the Irish guest of the Political Science Department, had defied and publicly denounced the academic boycott on South Africa.

⁴⁷ The Centre for African Studies initiated its own Acquisition Committee in order to pre-empt interference and avoid an ‘ethnographic’ representation. Composed of members of that department, as well as representatives from the Fine Art Department, the South African National Gallery and the Works of Art Committee, this body also critically defined an ‘acquisitions policy’ that singled out art, ‘primarily but not exclusively by black South Africans, working within a wide spectrum of media and grappling with a hybrid inheritance, giving rise to transitional or cross-over forms’.

university collection cannot survive as a museum, 'let alone establish a recognisable identity and purpose to be appreciated for' (Kozak, 2007: 154).

UCT had entered an affirmatory phase in the history of the collection, which sought to project a particular conception of the university as a modern, cultural institution, through the deliberate and selective acquisition of South African artworks. The one-percent guideline also represented an arrangement that advanced the collection in terms of the acquisition and display of works, embedding the collection across the architecture of the institution in order to promote the university's institutional identity. However, it conceded the provision for any of the other long-term commitments that an established museum or gallery would entail.

As a purpose-designed space for display and storage remained unavailable, the committee was obliged to manage as best as possible with inadequate space, personnel and environmental conditions. This lack of a gallery space had alarming implications for the physical condition of the objects: its primary resource. The artworks were to remain scattered amongst the offices, dining halls, conference rooms, and hallways of the university. Apart from their vulnerability from both a security and conservation perspective, this meant that, without a proper register or registrar, it became difficult to know exactly where the objects were located. Moreover, objects from the collection were often confused with personal property and absconded from the premises, as departing staff members vacated their positions. In addition, this display strategy made the

collection more difficult to showcase, resulting in a collection largely unknown outside of the institution, indeed sometimes even unnoticed within the university and its own departments.

Chapter 4 : Stewardship of the UCT Collection

The appointment of the Works of Art Committee, a centralised structure responsible for the management of the collection, and which responded directly to UCT's Research Council,⁴⁸ had the potential greatly to benefit the university and its artworks. However, the floundering committee had thus far been unable to take a position on the role of the collection to accomplish the systematic, efficient and economic stewardship of its material resources. The forthcoming chapter explores the committee's responsibilities of stewardship toward the objects in its care.

When things are deemed as 'cultural heritage' or 'property', we attribute values to them and elevate them to a certain status. Such objects are removed from the 'natural cycle of maturation and decay to remain as permanent representations of their former transient selves' (Rée, 2009: 3). In so doing, we enter into the delicate, unsettled arena of curatorship, as both 'keepers' and 'conservators'. It becomes difficult to retreat to a position of dismissal, eschewing conservation and embracing atrophy. Because we have chosen to *care*. 'Taking care' becomes the transcendent existential motivation and thus 'care for the past requires a care for the present' (Lowenthal, 1998: 11) and thus a care for the future.

⁴⁸ The Works of Art Committee is, in fact, established under the university's research cluster and reports to the University Research Council (URC) (University of Cape Town, 2009: 520), although this research potential and / or purpose is seldom recognised.

Custodianship, Curatorship, Conservation

The origin of the word ‘curator’ springs from the Latin *curare*, that is, ‘to care’. In ancient Rome, the title of curator, literally meaning ‘caretaker’, was given to senior civil servants, officials in charge of managing the empire’s various departments of public works, such as sanitation, transportation and policing (Strauss, 2006). In the medieval period, from around 1375, the role of the curator shifted to the domain of the church, and referred to the priests devoted to a spiritual charge: the cure and care of souls (Strauss, 2006). However, from 1661 onwards, the word ‘curator’ has come to denote ‘one in charge of a museum, library, zoo or other place of exhibit’ (Fowle, 2007: 10). Common to these different incarnations of the term are its hierarchical connotations of *presiding over* something, which suggests an inherent relationship between care and control (Fowle, 2007: 10).⁴⁹ From an administrative title to an ecclesiastical calling, the curator has always been a ‘curious mixture between bureaucrat and priest’ (Strauss, 2006).

The term ‘conservator’ is equally equivocal. While the English ‘curator’ becomes *conservateur* in the Romantic languages, a ‘conservator’ often translates as a *restaurateur*. The confusion between these territories of language seems to reflect our opaque understanding of the blurred delineation between curatorship and conservation. However unstable and dislocated the relationship, curatorship and conservation remain beholden to one another and coupled in the cause of

⁴⁹ See also the introduction to ‘Uncertain Curature: in and out of the archive’ by Pippa Skotnes and Carolyn Hamilton (2014).

custodianship.⁵⁰ Within collecting institutions, the role of curator has historically been based on the dominant concerns of the organisation and is not always distinguished from that of the conservator. Thus, the university curator is usually assumed to be personally responsible for the acquisition, classification, and safeguarding of those objects which form the institution's collection, emphasising physical care as a primary obligation.

At its meeting on the 17th of August 1983, the minutes of the reconstructed committee show that a survey of the university's catalogued art works, conducted by building supervisors, had revealed a number of items missing, 'mostly from some years ago' (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 17 August 1983). Considering that the Keasts had catalogued the collection for the first time only eight years previously, this should have been a startling disclosure as to the vulnerability of the collection. However, although the matter was noted with some concern, no real counteraction was taken.

Another 'cautionary tale' was included in an attachment to the meeting agenda, the Keasts' 31st *Progress Report*, which confessed that 'a large oil painting measuring 80 cm x 107cm' had been brought to the custodians' attention, having been recently discovered by the supervisor of the Arts Block in the basement of Jameson Hall (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 17 August 1983 [Addendum]). This work was, in fact, *The Doors of Mercy* by

⁵⁰ See also Pippa Skotnes and Carolyn Hamilton's introduction in *Uncertain Curature* (2013).

Arthur Hughes (originally part of the Bolus Bequest) and although the canvas itself was in miraculously good condition, the gilt frame and mount were in sore need of both cleaning and restoration. Several years later, this painting would in fact prove to be among the most valuable, financially, of the entire collection.⁵¹

However, the Works of Art Committee was not wholly blind to its responsibility for the care and safe-keeping of the collection. At a previous committee meeting held on the 19th of August 1980, the committee had, in fact, pronounced that the works of art should be seen as a historical collection; that is, requiring not only a suitably controlled environment for storage,⁵² but also a professional ‘museum curator’ (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 July 1980). At the time, the majority of the works of art were housed and cared for by the library, and were maintained by Captain and Mrs Keast, on a part-time basis.

While assuring the council of its high regard for the work being performed by the Keasts, the committee recommended that its satisfaction would be better met in a person of ‘professional expertise’ (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 July 1980). As a member of the support staff, this position required a candidate experienced in the management of works of art who could be connected with the university archives and report annually to the University Council. A replacement was not immediately forthcoming, however,

⁵¹ An on-site valuation by Christie’s in 2000 estimated the painting to be worth £800 000 (in excess of R9 million, at the time) (UCT Works of Art Committee, 7 December 2000). The frame would eventually be restored by conservator, Thomas Rebok, only in 2010 (UCT Works of Art Committee, 20 September 2010).

⁵² A suitably controlled environment for *display*, on the other hand, was not a serious consideration.

and after many years of valuable service, the aging Keasts were obliged to retire at the end of 1983, due to failing health (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, Report to Council: 31 July 1984).

In the draft of a report to council, dated 31st July 1984, which detailed the actions of the Works of Art Committee for the previous twelve months, it was recorded that Mr Christopher Peter had succeeded the pair in the role of custodian of the university collection, and that his existing duties as curator of the Irma Stern Museum had been expanded to include this new position (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, Report to Council: 31 July 1984). In addition to his already significant responsibilities at the ISM, Mr Peter was now charged with the organisation and supervision of all art exhibitions on UCT campuses; as well as the care of the permanent collection, including the collection's restoration needs.

Mrs Nora Keast, a self-confessed 'artist-turned-restorer', had previously undertaken all necessary acts of restoration either herself, or in consultation with Mr Johann Maree (Restoration Department of the University Libraries) and Mr Bosman (South African National Gallery). Thus, Mr Peter was similarly expected to learn simple restoration techniques, in order that he might have the ability to personally undertake minor projects, as well as to recognise and refer any major restoration to institutions such as the National Gallery (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, Report to Council: 31 July 1984).

However, Mr Peter's other commitments prevented him from acquiring the necessary skills and performing the required technical conservation techniques, himself. Mr Johann Maree, as senior conservator of the university library's paper and book conservation laboratory, continued to assist occasionally with the restoration of works of art on paper from the collection until his retirement in 2008. However, when no suitable replacement to take up Mr Maree's position could be found, the department was closed, permanently; no other conservation expertise has since been available in the university.

Where two persons working part-time had previously been considered insufficient to act as custodians to the collection, one individual was now sought to replace them in a part-time capacity, simultaneous to his already demanding, full-time employment at the Irma Stern Museum. Although Mr Peter was not lacking in experience in the display of collections, his lack of appropriate academic and curatorial training (which the committee itself had indicated as a priority) marks the appointment as somewhat anomalous. In accordance with an antithetical logic, it was also determined that one third of Mr Peter's salary would be drawn from the 'restoration' account.⁵³ Mr Peter's commitments were increased further, when he replaced Mr D. Wheeler (from the office of the Registrar) as Secretary to the committee.

In 1986, an invitation was extended to the committee secretary, Mr Peter, by Dr Raymund van Niekerk, Director of the National Gallery, to attend a seminar

⁵³ Leaving just R 1 992.00 per annum of the R 6 000.00 that comprised the annual budget for restoration under the Keasts' tenure.

entitled, *University Art Collections: their nature and validity*, as a representative of the University of Cape Town (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 February 1986). Arranged by the recently-founded South African Association of Art Historians, the conference was hosted on the 15th of March at the University of Pretoria and included ten participating institutions.⁵⁴ The format of the event was arranged so that the representative from each institution would present a short introduction regarding their collections; a summary of their holdings, and the challenges they faced (Alexander, 1986: 33).

This was the first, and thus far the only, public forum in South Africa that encouraged the communication of information about university art collections, and the problems experienced by their curators. The exchange was considered to be one of the achievements of this conference, and the collective holdings of the South African universities were found to be impressive in both their quality and quantity. In a review for the *De Arte* journal, Ms Lucy Alexander (curator of the UNISA Art Gallery) commented on the implications of this discovery, in that ‘the responsibility of the universities to effectively care for and conserve, not to mention exhibit and publicise’ their collections had become apparent (1986: 33).

Addressing the seminar, Dr Albert Werth (representing the Southern African Museums Association) focused his attention on the responsibilities of university

⁵⁴ The Potchefstroomse Universiteit, the Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit, the University of Cape Town, the University of Natal, the Universiteit van Oranje-Vrystaat, the Universiteit van Pretoria, the University of South Africa, the Universiteit van Stellenbosch, the University of the Witwatersrand, and the University of Zululand (Alexander, 1986: 35).

art collection-museums and galleries, not only toward their holdings, but also as regards their duties and the wisdom of accepting donations (Alexander, 1986: 33). Universities are often favoured over public museums because of their identity as educational institutions but are often inferior in terms of climatic control and staffing. A report on the conference proceedings by the UCT works of art curator, annexured to the subsequent committee minutes (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 20 June 1986) provides a glimpse into Mr Peter's particular concerns for the UCT Collection. In his report, he chastised the committee for its tendency to accept bequests and donations without critical consultation, commenting that such gifts had the potential to become liabilities, rather than assets. He also warned that to accept a valuable collection but subsequently neglect it was tantamount to signing a 'death warrant' for that collection (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 20 June 1986 [Annexure]).

The absence of equipped storage and/or exhibition areas was recognised as a common shortfall across a number of institutions, including UCT, as was the lack of curatorial staff.⁵⁵ In his report, Mr Peter supports his plea for the installation of a permanent art gallery at UCT with Werth's prescribed emphasis on adequate space for display and storage, crucial for the advancement of both teaching and research, as well as for practical safe-keeping (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 20 June 1986 [Annexure]). Deploring the general practice of hanging work in 'offices' as unprofessional museum

⁵⁵ Professor Alan Crump followed and outlined the political scene that ought to be engaged in for university art galleries to improve their situations. A discussion, chaired by Mr Stephan Welz of Sotheby's, and a visit to the Pretoria University collections concluded the day's events (Alexander, 1986: 33).

practice, Mr Peter quoted Werth to point out that there would be little point in controlling the storage environment, if works would continue to be hung for long periods outside of these confines (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 20 June 1986 [Annexure]).

Werth had also stressed the importance of appointing professionals with training in handling works of art, and thus Mr Peter recommended to the committee that the university should appoint permanent staff, properly trained, for whom museum courses 'should be obligatory', and of sufficient number to encourage activities as well as manage the proper curatorial administration of the collection (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 20 June 1986 [Annexure]).

In appreciation of the exchange of ideas and information between institutions at the seminar, Mr Peter also emphasised Werth's recommendation that provision should be made for an inter-loan system for artwork between universities. He argued that, in order for museums to qualify for such a programme, a basic form of SAMA (Southern African Museums Association) accreditation would be necessary, and institutions not in compliance with a certain standard would be excluded. Implying that the state of the university's collection was woefully inadequate, Mr Peter appears to have been hopeful that this might serve as an incentive for the university to reach the desired level of care (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 20 June 1986 [Annexure]). However, the custodian noted that Wits University and the University of South Africa (Unisa) were the only institutions which could boast of galleries resembling the

ideals expressed, and that all other local institutions represented at the conference had encountered frustrations similar to those of UCT (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 20 June 1986 [Annexure]).

The fortunes of university collections often fluctuate according to how they are staffed and, ‘a dedicated technician, an enthusiastic lecturer or a sympathetic head of department can make a crucial difference as to whether the collection flourishes or withers’ (Weeks, 2000: 10). The curators of a university collection-museum are therefore frequently seen to be, perhaps, its greatest resource (Kozak, 2007: 169). University art collection curators are typically isolated from the broader museum community, as the missions of the public and university art collections have become increasingly polarised (Weeks, 2000: 11). The perceived influence of a university collection is therefore largely dependent upon the curator being fully included in the academic hierarchy and life of the institution, rather than as part of a non-academic or administrative unit, with diminished authority. Whether the curator is considered to be on par with the faculty helps to determine the collection’s representivity in campus decision-making (Glesne, 2012: 12).

Although UCT possesses both a committee and nominated member of staff to take overall responsibility for the collection, it is effectively cared for on a part-time basis only; the role of curator being combined with other responsibilities (the balance between these roles is not formally defined). The common pattern is for curatorial activities to be carried out when and if time permits, rather than as ‘a matter of routine or priority’ (Arnold-Forster & Weeks, 1999: 14). Perhaps as

a result of the disconnect between the faculty and the activities of the curator, Mr Peter has been perceived by some sectors of the university community as no more than the university's 'interior decorator' despite his efforts to promote the care of the collection (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 October 2000). The custodian's lack of credibility amidst the university faculty corresponds with a deprecating attitude toward the collection itself.

Thus, while the University of Cape Town had established a sufficient art collection, availability of finance and expertise to provide a significant resource for the university, its mandate of efficient stewardship remained as yet unfulfilled. This may be because the most crucial element necessary for the continuity of collections is not to be found in the resources of physical space, funding or personnel, but rather in the collection's perceived relevance.

Universities are dynamic and complex institutions, and their resources are meted out according to their priorities; salaries must be paid to professors and researchers, support provided for students; there are running costs of buildings to be met, as well as maintenance and improvement of libraries, laboratories and classrooms; they also channel funding into expansion, investment and development (Lourenço, 2005: 156). The university art collection is in permanent internal competition with all of these concerns. In the midst of this struggle, it is a perception regarding the apparent insignificance, even frivolity, of artworks that often leads to such collections becoming vulnerable and lost. As Lourenço has argued, relevance brings resources, but more importantly,

relevance removes the impression of being permanently at the mercy of the council's budgetary discretion (2005: 156). Relevance brings recognition and visibility, which cultivate resources, which, in turn, nurture stability, autonomy and meaning (Lourenço, 2005: 156)

Following on from Mr Peter's report on the *University Art Collections* conference, in which he urged the university to employ assistant staff in order to perform administrative duties relating to the collection, the committee decided to consult a skilled librarian or cataloguer for the task of updating the inventory, including photographic records (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 April 1989). At its meeting in September 1989, the custodian's proposal was somewhat effete approved, in the form of a post-graduate student in History of Art (or equivalent), who was to be engaged in a part-time capacity for two years, specifically to assist with the restructuring of the catalogue (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 24 April 1990).

Mr Michael Lipschitz (a Masters student in History of Art, whose research project focused on the Charles Davidson Bell Heritage Trust Collection, and who held a diploma in Library Science)⁵⁶ was duly appointed to compile an updated, digitised catalogue. The completed register had an advantage over the original Keast catalogue in that it not only categorised artworks by medium but

⁵⁶ Remuneration for services rendered was to take the form of the waiving of annual fees, including registration and examination costs, over a period of two years (UCT Works of Art Committee, 24 April 1990). Because Mr Lipschitz was a bursary holder, the equivalent amount (a total sum of R 3 400.00 for two years) was awarded to him from the Works of Art Display Committee display entity, as was an additional R1300 for expenses relating to the conversion (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 24 April 1990).

made the records available on a digital system. However, it did not significantly expand upon the available information for the collection's works of art, nor did it include any documentary images. Due to difficulties experienced in regard to the required extent, technique and other ongoing requirements, the resulting register was considered insufficient as a comprehensive catalogue. Nonetheless, it provided an inventory that proved adequate for the purposes of an internal audit, and were passed on to the university's insurance and finance representatives in 1992 (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 19 March 1992).

The Registrar subsequently requested that the custodian draw up separate catalogues to include the university's collection of items of furniture and '*objets d'art*'. However, Mr Peter was unable to undertake this survey, and expressed his discontent with an already overburdened schedule, regarding his commitments as the active curator of the Irma Stern Museum, his service to the committee as secretary, as well as his role as custodian of all university artworks (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 21 October 1991). In addition, Mr Peter cited other priorities he considered to merit more immediate attention; principally, the transfer of archival items from the works of art catalogue into the custody of other collections (UCT Works of Art Committee, 19 March 1992).

In order to become consistent with the term 'university works of art' (as opposed to 'library collections') a number of items had been identified for relocation to archives more suited to their nature and type (University of Cape Town Works

of Art Committee Minutes, 21 October 1991). These included the Brand van Zyl Collection in the Law Library, the Bolus Bequest (with the exclusion of *Doors of Mercy* by Arthur Hughes, which looked ‘very handsome’ in its location at the College of Music), a number of cartography items recorded as ‘Works of Art’ in the Jagger Library, as well as a number of medical illustrations, prints or graphics (considered more appropriate to the Katrine Harries Print Cabinet) and miscellaneous items (cartoons, illustrations, illuminated manuscripts and historical sketches) better served by Special Collections (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 19 March 1992). All of these had originally been listed as art treasures under the ‘Keast Catalogue’ but were considered inconsistent with the updated record.

Later, in 2003, Mary van Blommestein would be hired as Database Controller and ‘Assistant Curator’, in order to fulfil the committee’s goal of completing an illustrated digital catalogue, or register. Anticipated to be available online, such an archive had the potential to grant the public a form of access to the consolidated collection, thereby advancing its role as a showcase for the university. A digital, comprehensive catalogue could also conceivably encourage the research potential of the collection.

The project inherited approximately 130 slides depicting artworks from the collection, which were then digitised for the database, while Ms van Blommestein was expected to photograph the remainder in the process of updating the inventory. Regrettably, Ms van Blommestein did not have any experience in photography or image editing, and furthermore, was supplied with

only the most basic equipment: a single Nikon compact digital camera,⁵⁷ while a colleague who had assisted with the design of the database trained her in its modest software package (van Blommestein, 2013). On the 26th of November 2007, Ms van Blommestein reported that four and a half years of work had resulted in a database comprising 1080 items⁵⁸ which was 'ready to be used by researchers' (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 26 November 2007).

Regretfully, the exceedingly poor quality of the images on the database was of concern from the outset (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 15 April 2010: 5). During 2008, Ms van Blommestein and the committee initiated a 'pilot project'⁵⁹ which introduced the university's art collection into several undergraduate courses, and made the database available as a research tool to a small number of students. However, save for its sporadic use by second-language English students through the Centre for Higher Education Development (CHED) and Visual Studies programmes, the database has not been successfully integrated as a resource into the university's academic programme. Owing to the vulnerability of the dispersed collection, access to the Permanent Works of Art Collection database remains restricted; for security reasons, it is not widely publicised and is password-protected for a small circle of users. As a result, it remains almost entirely unknown to the both the faculty and

⁵⁷ Upgraded to another compact digital camera, the Canon Ixus 105, several years later (van Blommestein, 2013).

⁵⁸ Compared with only 393 items that had been listed on the catalogue for insurance purposes, compiled by Mr Lipshitz between 1990 and 1992 (UCT Works of Art Committee, 19 March 1992). Ms Blommestein's catalogue also revealed a number of items to be missing or unlocated (UCT Works of Art Committee, 26 November 2007).

⁵⁹ In association with university lecturers Anna Tietze (Historical Studies) and Nick Shepherd (Centre for African Studies).

students of the university, much less the greater public. The poor quality of the available images, coupled with scant information, renders the catalogue almost entirely useless as either a research tool for its associated discipline, or as a means by which to showcase the collection to a greater audience.

At a later meeting, on the 28th of November 2008, the committee discussed the proposal by Mr Paul Weinberg (Senior Curator, Centre for Curating the Archive) presented by Professor Stephen Inggs (who would succeed Pippa Skotnes as Head of the Michaelis School of Fine Art), for the construction of a digital archive which would integrate all of the artwork on campus, allowing the archives to begin to 'talk to' each other. This was intended to be a remarkable resource for the collection to be used in integrated ways for research and teaching purposes. However, the proposal was not discussed in detail, because of a lack of time. The committee vaguely indicated that the principle was a good one, but resolved that it would be subject to a budget and would need to be done in stages. Unfortunately, the project was never approved and the opportunity for a functioning research database was quietly disdained.

Polishing Policy

Professor Michael A. P. Godby (Department of Art History) became a member of the committee in 1989 and shortly thereafter raised an important concern regarding the development and implementation of policy for the rationalisation, proper management, care and use of the UCT art collection (University of Cape

Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 22 August 1990). Policy comprises formal or systematic planning and goal-setting activities, along with assessment and evaluation techniques to measure progress toward those goals. This type of formal planning involves devising methods to accomplish set goals; outcomes are sought, decisions are made to reach those outcomes, and then actions are taken based on those decisions (Johnson, 2009: 66). Such planning would not be necessary in a static environment, but university collections themselves are by definition in a state of constant change, and are furthermore part of mutable, dynamic institutions (Johnson, 2009: 66). Good policy should anticipate change, providing a guide for continuity, and offering a structured way to envision and move toward the future.

A clearly-defined policy depends on the perceived purposes of a unique collection, as the role of each collection differs according to the nature of its resources, the history or traditions of its parent institution, the needs of the communities it serves, and the concerns of its administration (Thompson, 1992: 135). At a university, the functions of its collections usually reflect the missions of the institution, by emphasising the aims of research, teaching, and public display or through showcasing institutional identity in the tradition of second-generation university museums. It was therefore the committee's responsibility, as the collection's custodial body, to define or redefine the purpose of the art collection and to clarify its aims and objectives. This would allow its resources to be organised and its objectives met, over an agreed time-scale (Thompson, 1992: 135).

In 1991, Dr Mamphela Aletta Ramphele had succeeded Professor Reid in a part-time capacity after his retirement as Deputy Vice-Chancellor. In March 1992, she assumed the role of chair of the University of Cape Town's Works of Art Committee, an *ex-officio* position entailed by her membership of the university council. During her welcome at the first meeting over which she would be presiding, Dr Ramphele begged indulgence in respect of her acknowledged 'lack of art expertise' but emphasised that she would be grateful for an informal art education, in the form of good advice extended by committee members (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 19 March 1992).⁶⁰ Because of the heavy programme incumbent upon her post, as well as her perceived inexperience in the fine arts, Dr Ramphele proposed the revival of a small executive committee to promote acquisitions and assist the curator, Mr Christopher Peter (also the committee Secretary), in the execution of his duties. Four committee members were nominated to this executive committee, namely; Dr F. Bradlow, Prof. N. Dubow, Mr J. Elliott, and Mrs A. Saunders (wife of the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Stuart Saunders).⁶¹

In the context of storage, display and physical maintenance of the university's collection of artworks, there was still ongoing debate regarding a potential gallery. The chair requested, therefore, that the matter be thought through

⁶⁰ The committee membership, by this time, included several art professionals: Professor Neville Dubow (former Director of the Michaelis School of Fine Art and founding Director of the Irma Stern Museum), Professor Michael Godby (Art History) and Associate Professor Bruce Arnott (*ex-officio* member as Director of the Michaelis School of Fine Art), as well as non-art professionals: Mrs Anita Saunders, Professor B. A. Le Cordeur, Dr. Frank Bradlow, and Mr Justice M. A. Diemont.

⁶¹ The presence of the wife of the presiding Vice-Chancellor on the committee, Mrs Anita Saunders, who would be followed by Mrs Val West (wife to Professor Martin West, UCT Deputy Vice-Chancellor 1991-2008) and Mrs Deborah Posel (wife to Dr. Max Price, UCT Vice-Chancellor 2008-present) is an anomaly that indicates the domestic, decorative perception of the committee's function.

carefully and that a draft document be formulated in terms of; what *kind* of gallery the committee was proposing for the university; *where* it was to be situated; what the *personnel implications* would be for such a project; and what UCT's *space facilities* were in the context of the needs formulated (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Meeting Agenda, 23 October 1992, original emphasis).

At the Works of Art Committee Meeting on the 23rd of October 1992, Professor Godby presented an outline of the requirements related to an art gallery, to which Mr Julian Elliott (of the committee's executive committee and UCT's Planning Unit) attached a document outlining space feasibility. In the proposal, the construction of a gallery was tendered in order to gather together 'under one roof' the more valuable of the university's existing artworks, especially those in the more remote or inaccessible areas of the institution, in order to safe-guard and conserve (under controlled environmental conditions) the collection (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 23 October 1992 [Addendum: Proposed UCT Art Gallery]). Alternatively, the committee recognised the possibility of imposing a theme on such a gallery collection through its deliberate selection and arrangement of works on display, which it could thereafter pursue more prudently. Prof. Godby's suggested purposing of the collection to reflect 'quality' or to showcase recent graduates again hints at the desire for a gallery that favoured the fourth mission, in support of the university's institutional identity (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 23 October 1992 [Addendum: Proposed UCT Art Gallery]).

The chair expressed her regrets that the art gallery complex at the Irma Stern Museum, designed in 1980, was never realised (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 23 October 1992). To which Professor Dubow pointed out that UCT would be much more likely to attract major donations if a 'proper' gallery was in evidence, although he allowed that it would be difficult to justify the building of a gallery for the collection, as it stood. He suggested that the cause would be better served by emphasising its potential for the future (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 23 October 1992).

The chair, tending toward Professor Dubow's line of reasoning, stated that a strong case could be made for lost opportunities. She recalled a recent incident when the university appeared to have had the opportunity to acquire a notable art collection previously belonging to the late Nick Penny, but which was passed by due to practical limitations (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 23 October 1992). Some committee members suggested that perhaps donations for the construction of the unresolved Irma Stern Museum gallery might be forthcoming from alumni. However, Dr Ramphele indicated that a proposal for an art gallery at the ISM was unlikely ever to succeed. In fact, ever since the concept of an art gallery had been first proposed in 1977, adequate funding for its development had never been forthcoming from the university council (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 23 October 1992).

Professor Godby remained unconvinced overall concerning the construction of a gallery building for collections, stating that some venues for the purpose of exhibition already existed on campus. He favoured instead the development of an exhibition policy for the university's small, existing gallery spaces (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 23 October 1992). Mr Peter responded by pointing out that this had been addressed over the years, informally, and that the Irma Stern Museum, CAS Gallery and the Exhibitions Gallery at Michaelis all had specific areas in which they operated with a minimum of duplication. In contrast, Professor Dubow rekindled the suggestion that Hiddingh Hall would make an ideal venue. Hiddingh, which had in former days been a venue for music concerts, was large enough to support a permanent collection of UCT memorabilia, and could also function as an exhibition area for contemporary artworks. This last proposal received the general support of the committee (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 23 October 1992).

However, at the subsequent committee meeting, held on the 15th of March 1993, it emerged that no progress had yet been made in regard to the establishment of the Hiddingh Hall as a gallery-museum. Mr Peter informed the committee that he was unable to undertake the project due to a full work schedule (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 15 March 1993). By the end of the meeting, members of the committee expressed the opinion that the attempt to establish Hiddingh Hall as an art gallery, in conjunction with a historical museum, would be an unfortunate compromise which could effectively jeopardise the future establishment of a university gallery dedicated to the works of the

collection. In addition, the physical drawbacks of the premises were considered 'less than ideal', and this approach was therefore abandoned (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 15 March 1993).

Professor Godby had previously suggested that a clear decision be taken on exactly what the university intended to collect, illustrating its aims and objectives. He made the comparison with other university galleries, such as the Gertrude Posel at Wits, which specialised in African art, and had consequently built up a major collection (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 23 October 1992). Indeed, the Sasol Gallery at the University of Stellenbosch, the Johannes Stegmann Gallery at the University of the Orange Free State, as well as the galleries at Wits University were all put forward as inspirational models that UCT should imitate (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 23 October 1992).

The committee launched into an in-depth discussion on its purchasing policy, noting that the economic/budgetary strictures dictated very narrow parameters (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 15 March 1993). Despite the financial strictures, committee members determined that the pursuit of appropriate art works should continue, and established the following informal acquisitions strategy for artworks: a suitable sub-committee would be formed to identify works suitable for the committee's consideration; works would be South African, preferably related to the institution, and should be reflective of the significance of art as a 'thinking process'. In addition, works of high merit would be purchased from the students of the Michaelis School of Art; the collection

ought not to be too parochial;⁶² the purchases of the WOAC should not clash with the purchases of the CAS;, and, due to financial restrictions, the work of younger artists would have to be sought and purchased from the studio (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 15 March 1993).

These guidelines served to set parameters for the type of works the university intended to collect but failed to detail precise procedures for their procurement. It had been habit among the committee, in the past, for artworks to be acquired with the approval of as few as only two consenting members. At the committee meeting on the 24th of March 2004, Mrs Saunders, who had chaired the previous meeting in Dr Ramphele's absence, agreed that there had not been much enthusiasm for the method in which works had been purchased and urged that an agreement concerning the method of future purchases be reached, so as to facilitate such arrangements (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 24 March 2004).

The committee therefore sketched out the following precautions;⁶³ the need for artwork would have to be identified and sites of display established prior to purchase; the budget would have to be taken into account; a meeting of the committee would need to be arranged to view the work, and finally; votes would then be cast and a majority decision taken (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 24 March 2004). In order to streamline the process

⁶² With the curious notation, 'i.e. UCT is a University in Africa but not an African University' (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 15 March 1993)

⁶³ This procedure would not apply to the purchase of student work.

further, the committee approved that Mr Peter, in his twin roles as both the curator of the collection and secretary to the committee, be given voting rights in regard to acquisitions (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 24 March 2004).

Mr Peter informed the committee that he continued to receive frequent requests from members of the university staff for items of artworks with which to decorate their offices (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Meeting Agenda, 7 September 2004). This was an ongoing problem, as while acquisitions guidelines were now in place, no policy yet existed with regard to *where* works ought to be placed. Without a formal mandate, the committee continued to face difficulties regarding the arrangement of its artworks. As Mr Peter lamented, 'works are difficult to hang' (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Meeting Agenda, 7 September 1994). Most of the requests received were for 'cheerful', attractive artworks and negative responses were often received for works chosen from the material available in storage (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Meeting Agenda, 7 September 1994). A fair and even distribution of artworks was therefore difficult to implement. As a result, several areas in the university had 'inherited' works, whereas other areas remained comparatively bare⁶⁴ and in many cases were not considered to constitute suitable or secure venues (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee [Agenda], 7 September 1994).

⁶⁴ For instance, Michaelis at Hiddingh Campus (the University's Fine Art Department) has traditionally been neglected and severely under-represented in the allocation of works of art, presumably because it has never petitioned the committee for works from the collection. It perceives itself to be primarily a site for the production of art, rather than an environment to house its products. Because of this, it may be perceived to be in the service of the beautification of the other departments and disciplines and is considered to be 'self-sufficient'.

The committee noted the difficulties that Mr Peter had outlined in the agenda and consequently suggested that meetings were to be arranged with the permanent users of the area when artworks were placed. It was hoped that this would generate a democratic mood from the outset and would engender co-operation (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 7 September 1994). The custodian was asked to draft a detailed memorandum setting out his concerns in relation to the collection as a whole, the manner in which it was presently displayed and the areas for future improvements (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 7 September 1994). The committee also resolved that only public spaces and executive office areas be considered for the hanging of art works; but consented that works should remain in place until such time as a gallery should be established and the artworks recalled. Concerning the decision of where particular works of art should be hung, the committee resolved that these decisions be left to the discretion of the custodian and the newly-instituted executive committee; but recommended that a pragmatic approach should be taken in relation to the existing placement of art works (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 7 September 1994).

The committee's next meeting took place over a year later, by which time Professor Peter Horn (German Department) had assumed the chair. Professor Gavin Younge (*ex officio* member as Head of the Michaelis Fine Art Department) and Mr R. A. E. Fox (in his capacity as the chair of the Irma Stern Museum Committee) had also since joined the committee (University of Cape Town

Works of Art Committee Minutes, 13 October 1995). At the meeting, the committee debated the role of the collection, particularly in light of the allocated budget and the limited funds available for the restoration of artworks (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 13 October 1995).

The committee accordingly determined that it was incumbent upon them to undertake an extensive survey of the condition of artworks in the university's possession, in order to highlight the university's financial responsibility to keep its existing collection intact and in reasonable condition. While it necessitated a considerable and time-consuming exercise, this was considered worthwhile to bring the council's attention to the 'plight of its art heritage' (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 13 October 1995).

It was also suggested by individual members of the committee that their particular fields of interest and competence be made available for a professional assessment of various aspects of the collection. For instance, it was proposed that Mrs Saunders might assist with works on paper, Professor Gavin Younge with sculptures and Professor Dubow with paintings, together with the assistance of Mr Peter, and that of Mr Thomas Rebok, a professional restorer (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 13 October 1995). This cursory survey was conducted in early 1996. While few instances of deliberate vandalism

were reported, a considerable number of pieces were found to be in need of maintenance.⁶⁵

In 1997, at the request of the University's Finance Department for a 'vision statement', the committee drew up a 'Strategic Plan' for the years 1998 to 2001, which stated its aims under three headings: vision, goal and input. Under 'vision', the committee listed the promotion of the awareness and appreciation of the visual arts on campus, with particular relevance to works which would 'enhance the status of the University of Cape Town in the sphere of visual arts' (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 22 August 1997 [Annexure 2]). They also championed the maintenance, with sound curatorial responsibility, of the existing works of art on campus and the desire to strive to improve the conditions of security and display of these works (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 22 August 1997 [Annexure 2]). At its meeting on the 3rd of November 1998, the committee bid farewell to Professor Neville Dubow who had served on the committee since its inception, twenty years previously. Following this event, and somewhat ironically (given its recently drafted mission statement), the committee was entirely inactive for the following two years.

Agents of Change

⁶⁵ As stated in a letter from Mr Gavin Younge to the chair of the Works of Art Committee, dated 15 May 1996 (In UCT Works of Art Committee, 15 May 1996 [Annexure 1]).

In July 2000, the appointment of Professor Njabulo S. Ndebele as Vice-Chancellor at the University of Cape Town heralded a renewed academic interest into the subject of archives and, by extension, collections, at the institution. This emphasis found expression in the administration of the university's Permanent Works of Art Collection. When the committee was finally reconstituted in October 2000, Mr Hugh Amoore (Registrar) was designated by the Vice-Chancellor as the new chair; surely no coincidence, considering that Mr Amoore occupied the post of 'university archivist' as custodian of the university record. The committee now also included Professor Pippa Skotnes (*ex-officio* member as Head of the Michaelis School of Fine Art), but reflected the chair's staunch support for 'lay-persons' on the committee with a dominance by non-art professionals, including new members; Dr Jocelyn Kane-Berman (UCT Medical School), Professor Horst Klump (Molecular and Cellular Biology), Ms Lucia Thesen (Centre for Higher Education Development), and Ms Noëleen Murray (Centre for African Studies / Architecture).⁶⁶

At this meeting, the committee examined and discussed a document compiled by Mr Peter, Prof. Skotnes and Mr Amoore entitled, 'Taking Stock and Looking Forward' (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 October 2000 [Annexure 2]), a report which outlined the need for the committee to highlight specific aims and work in accordance with these. This included a 'coherent' acquisitions policy, the continued maintenance of an accessible catalogue, and consideration of the frameworks surrounding

⁶⁶ Professor Michael Godby requested greater clarity on the membership of the committee, pointing out that he was originally appointed in 1988 as an *ex officio* member via the Chair of the History of Art (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 October 2000).

exhibition and display. The committee found that the unsatisfactory, haphazard practice of acquiring art works for the decoration of departmental offices and reception areas has resulted in an unstructured collection policy and a temporary system of display, largely centred on the tastes of the current occupants of buildings (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 October 2000). This format resulted in an art collection ‘dispersed far and wide’ without any overarching structure (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 October 2000 [Annexure 2]).

The absence of a permanent venue (that is, a gallery, both properly staffed and curated) was recognised as a ‘problem’ but was equally noted as unlikely to be rectified (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 October 2000). Another difficulty encountered was the continued reliance upon the custodian to handle all selection, framing and hanging of the works, the implication of such requests being that the custodian’s role as curator of the Irma Stern Museum was compromised. Mr Peter proposed that the departments acquiring new art works be responsible for the framing and hanging of the pieces, but this suggestion was not considered practicable (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 October 2000).

In past years, the funding and administration between the Irma Stern Museum and the Works of Art Collection had been fluid. Given the success of the ISM and its relationship to the university’s collection, it had in fact been proposed in the past that the Works of Art and Irma Stern Museum committees be merged (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 24 April 1990),

however this was overturned by vote in both committees. Despite the appearance of autonomy, the independence of the two bodies was denied by the overlapping dual roles held by Mr Peter (and later, by Ms Mary Van Blommestein), as well as the ongoing *ex-officio* positions on the Works of Art Committee for both the Director of the Irma Stern Museum, and the chair of the ISM committee.

This conflict would repeatedly arise in matters related to the proposed art gallery. Overlooking that the original committee had once considered a gallery alongside the Irma Stern Museum to be a mutually beneficial prospect, (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 9 May 1979), some members of the committee feared that the establishment of a university gallery would compete with the ISM. Committee members affiliated with the Irma Stern Museum felt threatened by the proposed gallery, and countered the proposal with claims that the ISM already performed the role of university gallery (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 24 November 2008). However, in truth, the museum was under-resourced and certainly not equipped to carry the weight of the full requirements for a growing university collection (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 24 November 2008).

The Irma Stern Museum had, in fact, never been intended as a UCT gallery *per se*, and had not fulfilled that function. Instead, the property known as ‘The Firs’ in Chapel Road, Rosebank had been purchased with the primary aim of housing and maintaining an important collection, the work of famed South African artist, Irma Stern (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 July

1980 [Addendum: Deed of Sale]). While the building belonged to UCT and the collection was administered by the university, the vast majority of its contents belonged to the trustees of Irma Stern's estate. In its history and function, it therefore resembles most closely an independent, public museum, with very little input into the academic life of the university community.

From this debate, we can surmise that, because certain members of the committee were intimately implicated in the Irma Stern Museum, their loyalties lay in its success. They therefore opposed a gallery's construction lest the museum's limited resources prevented it from competing with the university's collection of treasures, fearing their interests could become marginalised as a result. Other committee members supported the establishment of a gallery in which to exhibit the university's art collection because it was hoped that this would raise the profile of art on campus in general, and thus promote, rather than detract from the mission of the ISM (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 24 November 2008).

A significant development took place in 2002, when the Works of Art Committee was entrusted with a substantial loan of artworks to the university's collection from the private collection of art patron, Mr Johann Clemens ('Hans') Porer. The loan benefitted from several additions of the following years, amounting to a total of 140 artworks,⁶⁷ and included notable works by South African artists, including Irma Stern, Zwelethu Mtethwa, Norman Catherine, Kendell Geers,

⁶⁷ With an combined estimated insurance value in 2008 of R27 724 300 (UCT Works of Art Committee, 23 July 2008).

Robert Hodgins, David Brown, Cecil Skotnes, and William Kentridge, amongst others. In return, the University of Cape Town institutionally and publicly recognised Mr Porer's contribution by awarding him with a Master of Fine Art *honoris causa* in December of 2005 for 'his support for and patronage of the arts in South Africa, as well as his contribution to the life of the UCT campus for the works of art he has made available' ("Four Honorary Degrees...", 2005).

The greater part of this collection was placed in the Chancellor Oppenheimer Library and, at the insistence of their donor, the artworks were carefully lit behind protective glazing, where appropriate (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 17 October 2002). In 2008, Mr Hans Porer went on to generously convert the major portion of his loan to the university into a bequest (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 23 July 2008). Of the 140 artworks forming the Porer collection, 104 would become the Porer Bequest while the remaining 36, thereafter referred to as the 'Home Artworks', would continue to be made available on permanent loan.⁶⁸

In symmetry with the origins of the committee, the potentiality of this bequest appears to correspond with a renewed seriousness in the university's approach to matters pertaining to the safe-guarding of the university's art collection. A workshop on the proposed university art gallery was held on the 1st of November 2002, to which members of the Works of Art and ISM committees, as well as representatives from UCT's Planning Department, were invited to

⁶⁸ The value of the 104 'UCT' artworks at the time came to R12 528 300, while the value of the 36 'Home' Artworks was R15 196 000 (UCT Works of Art Committee, 23 July 2008).

attend. In the outline, the WOAC chair suggested the following items for discussion;

- a) UCT should have a multi-purpose gallery which makes provision for a growing university art collection, and for exhibitions of three kinds: exhibitions from existing UCT collections (including those in libraries and on loan to the South African Museum); exhibitions specifically curated or invited; and exhibitions linked to scholarly conferences.
- b) UCT should have a gallery to influence its students (not only in the disciplines of Fine Art or Film); in order to alter the scholarly landscape; as well as make UCT an attractive venue for conferences.
- c) The hanging of the Porer loan in the library, as a careful collection and curation of contemporary South African art, was seen to have demonstrated the positive effect of exposure to art on both the students and the staff of the university. A first step (for the next 3 to 7 years) would be to see the library serve only part of the purposes set out above \ as a gallery; the middle to long-term vision (8 to 15 years) would be to include a gallery in the next Middle Campus academic building. This would locate it in a high traffic area concerning the student community (securing student usage in a similar way to that of the De Beers Gallery at Fort Hare), and in a complex destined to become an important conference venue. (Among the alternative locations, the Hiddingh Hall was once again suggested, despite the likelihood that it would not meet the requirements set out in a and b).
- d) The funding for the gallery building, the endowment, and the collection would have to be raised from donors (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Meeting Agenda, 17 October 2002 [Annexure 4]).

In response to the discussions and concerns raised at the workshop, as well as the subsequent committee meetings, the Works of Art Committee deemed it

material to embark upon a process of institutional self-consciousness with regard to the management of the existing collection and in particular, to develop a policy with regards to collections development. Thereafter, in October of 2003, Malcolm Payne (*ex-officio* member of the committee as Director of the Michaelis School of Fine Art) and Noëleen Murray drafted the most comprehensive 'Collections Development Policy' to date. In the draft, the constitution, membership and responsibilities of the committee were outlined to ensure representivity, as well as lines of responsibility and accountability. They noted the need for strategies to address the largely colonial and Western-based composition of collection, with emphasis upon redress and the inclusivity of black artists and local practitioners (Payne & Murray, 2003: available in University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 19 February 2004).

The draft also outlined the suggested purposes for which the university acquired work as: the support of excellent works in the fine and creative arts; exposure of students to excellent artworks; the display and enhancement of the built environment of the campuses; the visual documentation of key areas of engagement by UCT; and the preservation of unique Africa-focused, local works. The development of a teaching and research resource was also noted, with reservations (Payne & Murray, 2003: available in University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 19 February 2004).

At the committee meeting on the 4th of December 2006, the chair and secretary submitted for debate the first working draft of an Acquisitions Policy. The suggested policy identified the composition of the collection as: works of public

art for buildings and spaces that enhance the campuses; and works (in any medium other than those constituting installations, video, film or kinetic art) that challenge, entertain or please the university community. This responsibility was directed primarily to the university's students; secondly, to its staff; and finally, towards members of the public (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 4 December 2006). In the policy, the committee's prior preoccupation with the establishment of a dedicated gallery was noticeably absent. Instead, the proposed policy advised that the collections moveable works of art be displayed in an accessible manner in the campus building to 'educate members of the university about art and art production' (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 4 December 2006). The principal collection⁶⁹ was expected to include affordable works by a representative cross-section of contemporary South African artists.

While the Works of Art Committee had been established as subsidiary to the University Research Committee (URC), neither the university nor the committee had insisted upon the necessity of maintaining this relationship with the research office. As a result, the committee had never had to argue for the collection's academic relevance. In 2006, amidst discussions regarding the role of the WOAC and the formalisation of the one-percent policy, the committee did, however, issue a report to the URC outlining its responsibilities and activities for the previous year.

⁶⁹ The secondary collection was identified as the Katrine Harries Print Cabinet.

Also, over this period (from February 2006 to April 2007), UCT student Eva Franzidis conducted an internship with the Works of Art Committee as part of her Master's research project, which scrutinised the history of the collection and its administrative body. From this, we can perhaps start to discern a self-reflexive and intellectual shift in the university's attitude toward the collection and indeed, my own thesis may be seen to contribute toward this trend. Franzidis's resulting thesis, which outlined recommendations for the committee's transformative potential, was distributed to members and tabled for discussion (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 26 November 2007). Two of the injunctions, in particular, relating to the composition of the committee (which favours a white male demographic and does not represent the student body); and the opacity of the collections policy, were taken under consideration (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 26 November 2007).

At its meeting, held on the 26th of November 2007, the committee noted (apparently with some surprise) that the draft policy by Noëleen Murray and Malcolm Payne had still not been adopted (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 26 November 2007). The committee also identified a number of supplementary issues which the collections development plan would need to address: the practice of an 'open gallery' with no formal gallery space designated limited clear targeting in regard to acquisitions; the committee had been disinclined to make major purchases as the placement of these works was not always clear; the lack of a full-time curator to guide and shepherd the collection had resulted in a lack of collective narrative; and the need, or perceived

need, to 'decorate' continued to influence acquisitions (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 26 November 2007).

Overall, the committee felt that there was nevertheless some substance to the collection that could be built upon, despite its idiosyncratic nature. Some members favoured a continuation of the current opportunistic practice, informed by strict considerations as to the quality of the work, the necessary durability of materials dictated by the 'permanent' and environmentally-vulnerable nature of the collection; and the absence of a gallery space. While there appeared to be endless opportunities to add to the collection, these members acknowledged the wisdom or prudence in identifying important themes to strengthen (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 26 November 2007). Others suggested a more focused policy and argued that it would be of greater use to review the Murray/Payne draft. A second version of the collections policy was thereafter compiled on the 17th of October and distributed at the committee meeting on the 24th of November 2008.

In regard to the acquisition of artworks, Stephen Inggs (Director of the Michaelis School of Fine Art) proposed the revival of an acquisitions sub-committee of connoisseurs, comprising art experts from within and/or beyond the university (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 24 November 2008). However, while the idea of a sub-committee was greeted favourably, some committee members, including Mrs Val West⁷⁰ and the chair,

⁷⁰ Wife to Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Martin West.

Mr Amoore, disagreed with the exclusion of non-practitioners in the art field and recommended this base be broadened, citing possible conflict of interest as a concern. As a result, the chair determined to appoint a panel of at least four experts in the field, but not ‘members of the trade’ who would be offered a 3-year term of office (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 23 March 2009). An acquisitions sub-committee was duly formed to assist the committee in bringing cohesion and clarity to the collection (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 10 June 2009). This sub-committee determined to appoint one of its members as a temporary ‘convener-curator’ in conversation with a representative of staff when considering acquisitions for any particular building in line with the one-percent policy, but all final acquisition decisions ultimately rested with committee (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 10 June 2009).

Finally, on the 28th of September 2009, the Works of Art Committee approved its first, official acquisitions policy, in which the committee set out the following three aims for the collection:

- a. To develop and maintain a visual art collection of work of demonstrable excellence by South African artists, giving particular attention to artists with a connection to UCT.
- b. To acquire and commission works of art which enhance buildings and spaces (having regard to the policy of spending 1% of the cost of a building on works of art to enhance it).

- c. By displaying work across campus as a dispersed gallery / museum to expose members of the university to a representative range of work by South African artists (UCT Works of Art Collection Policy).

Over the UCT Works of Art Committee's thirty-year process in establishing a collections policy, it has had to grapple with two principal preoccupations: strategies for acquisition and those for display. The university's acquisition policy was certainly necessary to provide a coherent reference for the constantly shifting membership of the committee when assessing potential acquisitions, as well as perhaps for potential donors, looking for a suitable repository for their objects. This policy could thus be referred to in the making of appraisal and acquisition decisions, as well as in allocating resources. It delineated the parameters of what objects the institution would thereafter be permitted to acquire, or required to preserve, and represented the foundation for the 'development of more detailed acquisition plans and strategies, appraisal criteria, and related procedures' (Canadian Council of Archives, 1993). In this sense, the university's acquisitions policy provided a backbone around which the institution could extend its holdings in a 'planned, co-ordinated, and systematic manner' (Canadian Council of Archives, 1993).

Any repository is limited and cannot collect indiscriminately. Instead, only material that is relevant and valuable to the *mission* of the collection ought to be acquired; a formal policy simply assists to guide this activity. The composition of the university's inherited collection, which had emanated from several early, key bequests, already provided a framework, a series, which informed its subsequent

acquisitions. The committee thereby prioritised works of ‘demonstrable excellence’ by South African artists, site-specific work and other art pieces which could contribute to the overall congruity, while the status and character of the collection were strengthened by the influential Porer loan. Elkins has insisted that ‘art history has always been inseparable from nationalism and from anxieties about the kind of life people want to live and the values they hold most closely’ (Elkins, 2002: 68), but the emphasis of the Works of Art Committee’s ‘manifesto’ above suggest that we might just as reasonably substitute the word ‘collection’ for ‘history’, here.

Patronage & Prestige

As the history of the committee has so far shown, it has long been gripped by indecision, a result of its confusion regarding the collection’s role within the university’s mission. As a result, it failed to act on its decisions or actively pursue proposals. The collection’s potential functions for teaching and research were diminished through its apparent irrelevance to the intellectual concerns of the discipline, as well as the minority representation of departmental expertise on the committee. At the same time, its potential for exhibition and display, as well as for the representation of institutional identity, were limited due to the inaccessibility of its dispersed display strategy and inadequate online visual catalogue, which effectively excluded the public. Yet, the committee’s development of policy and continued investment in the collection indicates that the collection possessed a value for the institution beyond the merely decorative.

While the committee's inertia resulted in its inability to articulate this mission clearly, its guiding principles seem to correspond most closely with the role of the collection as 'showcase', which emphasised the enhancement of the university's built environment, and exposure of its various communities to its cultural heritage, represented by the art collection. However, its strategy of display did not prioritise its access by an external public, nor its prolonged preservation for the future. An unintended consequence of the particular constellation of values manifested by this collection instead resulted in a tendency for it to practice an approach more closely resembling patronage.

'Patronage' is, of course, a loaded term, originating from the Latin, *pater*, for 'father'. As Marjorie Garber has suggested, this connection with, or analogy to, a system of patriarchy or patrimony is 'not incidental but central' (2008: 2). The English word 'patron' has come to mean 'one who takes under his favour and protection, or lends his influential support to advance the interests of 'some person, cause, institution, art or undertaking' (Garber, 2008: 2), and institutional collecting is a distinctive form of patronage shared by government, commerce and academia. As Garber has claimed:

All the forces that have gone into making the story of art patronage through the ages – wealthy individuals, passionately concerned mentors, national pride, rising arts consciousness among the middle class and across ethnic, social and gender lines find a natural and powerful home in the university, where freedom of expression, the toleration of difference, and the high value placed on originality and imagination have defined the very essence of the institution (Garber, 2008:191).

In the preface to her book, *Patronizing the Arts*, Garber proposes that patronage results in an inevitable dialectic between the simultaneous *devaluation* and *overvaluation* of art, and that each brings comparably destructive results (Garber, 2008: xi). By this, she claims that the arts are *under-valued* through being deemed ‘nonessential’, even while being financially supported and valued by foundations, corporations and wealthy individuals, or, in this case, the university. Simultaneously, because art has come to be aligned with luxury possessions (that is, objects of taste and desire), its worth has become *over-estimated*, and its activity perceived to be predominantly recreational (Garber, 2008: xi). Art, whether by its process or its products, is therefore valued for its ability to elicit the aesthetic experience, beyond the realm of regular activity. This results in the paradox of art’s simultaneous *over-valuation* as ‘transcendent’.

If true, this concept has the potential to illuminate the apparently incongruous approach of the university to its own collection of artwork in two related ways; in its approach to the discipline of art-making and in its treatment of its art collection. Firstly, a perception of art objects as ‘transcendent’ affects the construct of art production as a profession and discipline. The idea of art as transcendent renounces the processes of work, experiment, error, correction; in essence, those processes that mark the traditional canons of scholarship (Garber, 2008: xiii). It returns to earlier conceptions of art, such as the medieval devotion to the rare and miraculous, or the Enlightenment’s valorisation of genius and ‘great artists’. This conflicts with the committee’s own avowed commitment that acquired artworks ‘should reflect to the public at large that art is a thinking

process' (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 15 March 1993). In order to harmonise with the academic project, fine art must be understood to be a product of intellect, rather than creative genius or mere mechanical skill (MacDonald, 1970: 17).

Secondly, the natural consequence of a perception of art as 'transcendent' has a dangerous effect upon the conception of the materiality of the object (Garber, 2008: xiii). Returning to Veblen's idea of conspicuous consumption, Pierre Bourdieu locates a strategic action such as patronage not only in the capacity to possess, but also in the ability to appropriate objects with a perceived or concrete sense of immaterial value; transcribed as 'symbolic capital'. In this way, an individual or institution may pursue the self-interested acquisition of cultural capital, such as art collections, in order to secure material and symbolic profit (Bourdieu, 1986: 245). Culture and economy are thus intricately linked in a web of mutual constitution (Bourdieu, 1986: 243).

While the university may not have obviously demonstrated a reverence for its artworks as transcendent, this concept of simultaneous under- and over-valuation of art objects would go some way to explain its decoupling of the department and collection, as well as its apparent disregard for the physical condition of works after acquisition. That is, the deliberate acquisition of art, entailing economic costs of both finance and time, would be considered worthwhile if it ultimately contributed towards the accrual of a particular symbolic value. This element of cultivated prestige, through patronage, would then be inferred upon, not only the university as an institution, but the viewers and

admirers of the works, albeit in a different but important way (Pearce, 1995: 154); the economic, aesthetic and symbolic values invested into the environment of the university architecture and the dispersed art collection are inscribed upon its communities. The university's staff, students and visitors could thus be seen to cultivate cultural capital in the embodied state, i.e. *bildung* (Bourdieu, 1986: 244). The natural consequence of an institution finding the primary value of the art collection in its *immaterial* qualities, such as inferred prestige or cultural literacy, is that the physical condition of the objects becomes incidental.

Chapter 5 : Keeping and Curating the UCT Collection

In the university collection, the custodian's duty is often an ethical one, shaped by multiple commitments: to the institution, to the objects in its collection and to the public. As a steward of cultural heritage, the university's possession of an art collection incurs certain social and ethical obligations for it to provide proper physical storage and management; to take care of the works of art and their associated documentation. As a university collection, the works of art were to be held in trust for the university's communities, and needed to be made accessible for their benefit.

This chapter explores several concepts associated with the university's responsibilities of conservation and curatorship. 'Preservation', as the attempted prevention or delay of destruction, is highlighted in relation to specific instances of damage and sites of conflict in the collection's history. Meanwhile, the practice of 'exhibiting' is seen to mark the act of curation, which has received an increase in critical attention at the university in recent years.

Preservation & Destruction

Appeals for a dedicated gallery space to house the UCT Works of Art Collection repeatedly invoked the primary necessity of safe-keeping the university's art objects. The collection has always been exceptionally vulnerable to theft and

accidental or deliberate destruction, as well as to more subtle forms of damage rendered by exposure and to, and fluctuations of, aspects of their environment; from light, temperature, humidity and dust. In addition, many of the larger sculptural pieces are situated in the outdoor areas of campus and have been noted as being 'particularly prone to attacks' (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 April 1989).

Several of the university's artworks have indeed suffered direct damage as a result of negligence and instances of vandalism, including Professor Bruce Arnott's, *The Trick Cyclist* bronze sculpture and the *Oracle* water feature on Jameson Plaza. For instance, Gavin Younge's sculpture in welded steel on University Avenue, *From Hoerikwagga*, had been periodically and repeatedly daubed with spray-paint, ever since its installation (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 13 September 1984).

In response to these recurrent events, Professor Reid, as the chair of the committee, expressed the opinion that 'vandalism could be curbed by educating viewers by means of a written statement by the artist as to his intentions, etc.' (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 18 April 1989). The paucity of accompanying legends and contextualisation for the works of art on campus may indeed have contributed to a sense of alienation for the users of the sites in which works are located, however most attempts to combat vandalism through education alone have thus far proved unsuccessful. Even after Mr Younge produced an artist's statement relating to his work for distribution to the users of the site, the sculpture continued to be vandalised, and its patina

became increasingly damaged due to the effects of the agents required to remove the paint (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 15 September 1989).

The university's conflicting position on the materiality of its collection of art objects, which did not recommend their preservation, but was nonetheless displeased by their destruction was dramatised in one particular instance of vandalism. In early March of 2005, two unframed works of art by Gabriel Clark-Brown, on display in the Bremner Building, on the Middle Campus of the University of Cape Town, were deliberately defaced with ballpoint pen.

Clark-Brown, a graduate of the Michaelis School of Fine Art, had been invited by the university to hold an exhibition at Bremner, to coincide with a seminar series on transformation, chaired by the incumbent vice-chancellor, Professor Njabulo Ndebele. This programme of workshops and events was launched in order to examine the way in which the concepts of disability, gender, race and Africa were being addressed in the university curriculum ("The Art of the Matter", 2005). The accompanying exhibition included nine works in print-media, which had been part of a series originally exhibited as Clark-Brown's Master's degree project in 1994, and related to the social construction of disability in South African society. The show was exhibited in the Archie Mafeje Room (previously the Senate Room) Foyer, an area generally reserved for portraits of members of

Council and Senate.⁷¹ Within just days of the opening of the exhibition, it was noticed that two of the etchings, *Painting Reality* and *Saun James Mthethwa with Art Agent*, had been scarified with ballpoint ink.

Staff reaction was one of outrage that ‘intellectual debate and discussion had been violated by this destructive response’, and the artist, in turn, conveyed his own dismay at the ‘injustice of the event in an academic environment, where rights and freedoms were enshrined’.⁷² The Works of Art Committee responded to the incident by condemning the ‘wanton destruction’ of the two artworks and expressed their regret of the event. The committee also requested the artist's permission to purchase the two works, together with new editions of these etchings. Both the vandalised prints, as well as the new editions, were then framed behind glass and placed on permanent display in the Bremner Building entrance. The etchings have been arranged on facing walls on either side of the stairwell, the vandalised works at eye-level, with the corresponding, new editions above. Both pairs are accompanied by explanatory labels, detailing information about the artist, the works and the circumstances surrounding this event, such as are known.

It is curious that the committee should choose to respond in this way, through a display which commemorates and reconciles the act of vandalism with the

⁷¹ These portraits had been temporarily relocated to form part of a separate exhibition at Hiddingh Hall, marking the University's 175th anniversary, entitled, *Curiosity CLXXV: Curating the University*.

⁷² As stated on the supplementary label, written by Mary van Blommestein on behalf of the Works of Art Committee.

integrity of the undamaged artwork. Whereas mediation is otherwise largely absent between the collection and the university's communities, the committee here chose to adopt the role of interlocutor. Rather than a violation of intellectual discussion, this 'destructive response' became a platform by which works from the collection served to figure in an academic expression of controversial debate. Amidst conflict, the collection and its committee seemed mostly closely aligned to the functions of the university.

The destruction of art tends to elicit particularly emotional dialogue. What is it about the nature of works of art that their destruction 'outrages' and 'dismays' (Mitchell, 2005)? Certainly, the destruction of an artefact deemed 'public property'⁷³ is customarily condemned; the loss of something considered beautiful or unique, lamented as a tragedy. However, the particular reactions and rhetoric concerning the vandalism of artworks, which mimic those of violence against human victims,⁷⁴ seem to articulate a particular conception of art as object.⁷⁵

Simultaneously, there is an implicit belief that a work of art is *more* than an inert material thing; as if the work of art claims the potential for agency (De La Fuente, 2010: 4). At the risk of labouring the obvious, works of art (or objects

⁷³ The advent of the public art gallery or museum transformed the concept of 'public property' to encompass artworks found in the institutional space; be it gallery, museum or university. It may even be broadened to include all artworks of cultural value, irrespective of private ownership.

⁷⁴ Particularly of violence against women, as Gridley McKim-Smith observed in her article, *The Rhetoric of Rape: the language of vandalism* (McKim-Smith, 2002). McKim-Smith argues that in circumstances of vandalism, we tend to use language that feminises works of art, as well as speak of the violence against them in terms reminiscent of sexual crimes or abuse, regardless of whether the artworks are representational.

⁷⁵ See also W.J.T. Mitchell's, *Offending Images* (2005).

and events defined as such by certain people, under certain circumstances) possess a plurality of function. They encapsulate a number of different values, from the symbolic, to more commercial or patrimonial dimensions (Gamboni, 2007: 285). For instance, institutional collections, such as that of this university, tend to acquire works of art with their longevity in mind.

These values correspond with a variety of attitudes, personal, 'aesthetic' or emotional experiences that viewers may have to works of art, as artworks do seem to possess a type of displaced agency or causality, provoking a response such as appreciation. Aggression toward an artwork tends to be an exceptionally conspicuous reaction on a behavioural level, a symptom of a particular relationship between image and spectator (Freedberg, 1989: xii). It is this confrontation between belief and object, signifying certain values, which motivates particular actions. As Freedberg affirms in *Iconoclasts and Their Motives*, the destruction of art 'crucially exposes the dialectic of the relationship between art, as a material object, and the beholder' (1985: 12).

While works of art are seldom (although not never) intended to be destroyed, the very nature of time predicates change, and it is the natural fate of artefacts to perish (Gamboni, 2007: 25); indeed every single material object may be seen in view of a brief existence between creation and destruction (Lowenthal, 1998: 10). Destruction, along with creation and preservation, may even be seen to be intrinsic to what heritage *is*. However, it is important to be aware that creation and destruction are not binary opposites, and that both preservation and destruction may not be the final interventions in the life of an artwork, but

merely count among many alterations in the course of its existence. As a 'standard' or 'authentic' existence of an object would be difficult, if not impossible, to determine, it holds true that an artwork's creation, too, may not represent an isolated event but instead comprise several separate interventions in the lifespan of an object (Gamboni, 2007: 25). Some works of art are however intended, through 'creative' interventions, to deliberately manifest in destruction, particularly in contemporary art,⁷⁶ as the artworks are anticipated to be destroyed through either time or use (Powell, 2007).

On this spectrum between creation and destruction lies *preservation*. A behaviour in response to an action, preservation denotes those interventions motivated by the desire to prevent a work of art from being consumed by the passage of time. However, there can be no true antidote to destruction, and conservation consists instead of remedies that transform the physical object, in order to counter deterioration. Preservation, then, is a form of maintenance, an active process; it requires vigilance, observational skill, and intimacy (Willoughby, 2013: 188). Sadly, those exact activities which the Works of Art Committee has been unsuccessful in habituating. Like 'maintenance', *preservation* is an unfashionable term, long associated with 'drudgery, menial tedium, and the non-heroic efforts of janitors, maids, and grounds-keepers' (Willoughby, 2013: 188). It is perceived as the effort to erase dust, that is, the evidence that objects are unavoidably captive to time's transformations.

⁷⁶ 'Destruction art' generally refers to such artworks of which the intent, means and / or materials may be intrinsically destructive, rooted in the auto-destructive art movement that was manifested at the *Destruction in Art Symposium*, held in London in 1966.

But if both vandalism and preservation are behaviours which physically transform the object, how then, does one distinguish an act of vandalism from an intervention of preservation? For that matter, how might one distinguish conservation from mutilation, at all? It may be that we perceive alterations to objects to take different forms, based on their perceived intentionality; either deliberate or accidental. These designations are further based on whether interventions are ascribed as influences toward the increase or decrease in the object's value. The characteristics of aging and weathering upon objects through time are perceived as 'patina' and customarily considered to be desirable, denoting an unintentional increase in value. 'Conservation' is used to describe the deliberate intervention to the art object that also results in an increase in value, whereas 'deterioration' or 'vandalism', on the other hand, refer to such metamorphoses that reduce value; unintentional or deliberate, respectively. However, neither intention nor value are quantifiable material factors, nor properties intrinsic to the object, but instead represent subjective perceptions or judgements, *taste* (Muñoz Viñas, 2005).

Although it may be possible to measure the series of alterations that affect the existence of an art object (for instance the weakening of wood-pulp paper through the effects of acidic compounds), or even to predict the degree to which certain features will alter (such as the exact fugitive nature of a pigment), the degree of 'damage' or 'repair' is not always proportionate to the degree of alteration (Muñoz Viñas, 2005: 101-104). Thus, a stain to a written document, which remains legible, may be perceived as less destructive than an identical stain to an engraving, whereby the aesthetic qualities of the work of art are

reduced. Indeed, the degree of damage may vary still with the placement of the stain, which would be seen as more or less 'harmful' depending on whether or not it interfered with the image area. Some actions which might be termed 'damaging' might, in fact, imbue meaning, adding value of a different type (Such as one occasion when Marcel Duchamp added his signature to a 'huge old-fashioned painting' by an unknown artist at the Café des Artistes in New York, in 1916) (Gamboni, 2007: 268). This explains why so much controversy in the field of conservation concerns whether a given alteration represents 'patina' or 'damage', in the Ruskin tradition.

What compels us to adopt this attitude of preservation, and how then do we ascribe judgements of value in determining what is worthy of preservation and conservation? One response is an awareness of the layers of responsibility inherent in its curatorship of the art collection; not only to the artists, students and the institution that it represents, including the general public, but also on a grander scale. For instance, the university has avoided the acquisition of ephemeral artworks in favour of those which follow in the tradition of museological values such as permanence, preservation and historicity. However, the university has not demonstrated its confidence in either the scholarly or practical values of conservation, as evidenced in its failure to properly maintain the physical collection, its closure of the library's conservation department, and the absence of skills training or indeed any conservators on staff. Unlike many other institutions which boast of rigorous fine art departments, the University of Cape Town does not, as yet, offer any programme in fine art conservation-restoration.

Over the collection's history, there have been other isolated instances of controversy and points of conflict. For example, in April of 1992, the painting *Sixpence* by the artist, Richard Keresemose Baholo, destined as it was for the central key position in the middle of the University of Cape Town Senate Room wall, received a cool reception from the university executive. Comments were less than favourable and, as a direct result of opposition by the users of the building, both this artwork and its companion, *Untitled Triptych* by Norman O'Flynn, were immediately removed and banished to storage.

In 1991, Professor Neville E. Dubow and Mr Christopher Peter had visited the studio of the post-graduate student, Richard Baholo, at the Michaelis School of Fine Art with a view to purchase a work for the university's Permanent Works of Art Collection.⁷⁷ The selected work, entitled *Sixpence*, was made available for viewing by the full committee, amongst others, at the time of its next meeting on the 19th of August of that year. The work was valued at R1500, and it was proposed that both the cost of the acquisition and its framing would be met by the committee's purchases entity, which amounted to R14 7770, at the time.

The committee's attention had recently been drawn to its unresolved commission to change the 'image' of the Bremner Building, the administrative heart of the institution, through the introduction of contemporary works of art

⁷⁷ Baholo is an artist who deftly borrows from the melancholy, violence and humour of European Masters such as Bosch and Rubens to create large-scale paintings that confound cultural mythology, political, gender, racial and religious stereotypes (Friedman, 1996), and whose work bears a distinctly pandemonius style.

in order to replace the 'homage to white male dominated history', that is, portraits of the university's vice-chancellors that were perceived to monopolise the available atmosphere and hanging space (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 23 October 1992). Controversy arose over the fate of these portraits, and suggestions included either their redistribution or removal to storage. Debate ensued amongst the committee members as to the differing values of historical or artistic importance in the university's collection. Some members suggested that the history of the university was tied up with 'white males' and that the strategy of relocating these paintings from prominent positions to hidden passageways would not be sufficient to change the perception of the university and its association with 'whiteness' (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 15 March 1993).

Nonetheless, the committee sympathised with the chair's position that the portraits served to alienate a great many users of the building (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 23 October 1992). As an alternative, the chair had strongly recommended that the committee approve the purchase of an artwork suitable for display in the Senate Foyer of the Bremner Building in order to initiate these 'desired changes' to the area (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 15 March 1993). At the viewing of the selected works for consideration, committee members expressed particular enthusiasm for the Baholo work and therefore recommended the hanging of this piece, as well as another artwork, an etching, *Untitled Triptych* by Norman O'Flynn. The second artwork had already been purchased with funds donated by

Mr Gavin Younge for the *Education for the Future* campaign and had been framed with a similar view to being hung in the foyer.

However, the committee's decision to replace the portraits of past vice-chancellors with contemporary works in an attempt to foster a new 'atmosphere' in the senate foyer immediately met with difficulties. A viewing was arranged for *Sixpence* and *Untitled Triptych* to be shown to the university executive in the foyer of the Senate Room, who could then express their opinions on whether or not they were considered suitable (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 23 October 1992). Both artworks received unfavourable comment from the users of the building, including the Registrar, Mr Hugh Amoore.

Despite the chair's strong recommendation that *Sixpence* be placed in the Senate Room, the works were retrieved and placed in indefinite storage at the Irma Stern Museum premises (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 15 March 1993). While the committee acknowledged the exercise as a failure, it agreed that the pursuit of change in the tone of the Bremner Building's artworks should continue, and recommended that the advice and suggestions of the committee ought to be more seriously considered by the university senate in matters such as the display of artworks, the matter was left unresolved (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 15 March 1993).

Almost exactly one year later, a large 'landscape' painting in tempera and acrylic, entitled, '*Langkloof 1991*' by Leon de Bliquy was suggested as suitable for the senate foyer. Despite the irregularity of its approval by only two members of the committee, the acquisition proceeded at a cost of R22 000, which exceeded the purchases vote by R12 000 for the remainder of the year, thus exhausting the annual budget for the following year, as well as necessitating the loan of funds from the budgets allocated for restoration (R8 000) and the production of legends / plaques to accompany works (R4 000). This work was accepted as a *fait accompli* by the committee. In comparison to the Baholo work, it was met with a decidedly more favourable reception by the executive and building users. The portraits of the vice-chancellor and ex-chair were moved in accordance with the committee's previous recommendation to relocate the portraits of those deceased to the side-walls, and the portraits of Sir Richard Luyt and Mr Len Abrahamse were moved to the two walls opposite the landscape.

This equivocating process continued to unfold when the UCT Student Affairs department donated six Baholo oil paintings on canvas to the university art collection in 1994, which were gratefully accepted. These works were intended as a series illustrating the recent history of the university, in light of the first democratic election of South Africa, with the depiction of Jameson Hall as a unifying theme. Four of the works, *Graduation Day*, *Extinguished Torch of Academic Freedom*, *Release our Leaders* and *Stop the Killings* had already been completed at the time of the donation, with two more works in progress, entitled *The Graduation of Nelson Mandela* and the *Honorary Doctorate for Bishop Desmond Tutu* to follow. The sequence of paintings was swiftly hung in the Senate Room

(while the portraits remained in the foyer), but were relocated in 1997 to the Molly Blackburn Hall in the Otto Beit building, and then again to their current location beside the restrooms in the University Avenue foyer, in the face of renewed opposition.⁷⁸

It is interesting to note that the content of these works may have contributed to a particular ‘collecting moment’ in the committee’s history, in which a number of works considered as activist art were acquired; ‘figurative, angry images of local topical issues’ principally from the 1970s and 80s (Tietze, 2007). In this instance, one might argue that it was the particular style of the artist, Baholo, which was found to be objectionable. Indeed, the committee accounted for the hostile reaction to these the works as evidence of the difficulties involved in the conceptual co-ordination of isolated contemporary artworks, when contrasted by surrounding existing portraits executed in a more ‘traditional’ mode (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 15 March 1993).

However, placement of other works from the collection, of an entirely different nature, have similarly not always been met with success. For instance, this may be illustrated by the controversy surrounding the painting by Arthur Hughes, *Doors of Mercy*. After inspection and valuation, the work had been removed from its position at the College of Music and placed in the imperfect storage facilities

⁷⁸ At present, *Sixpence* may be found in the Centre for Higher Education while another piece by the same artist, *The Girl Witch* is situated in the College of Music. O’Flynn’s etching in triptych and de Bliqy’s painting are hung in the Chancellor Oppenheimer Library, part of the Upper Campus Development Project, which opened in 2001.

of the Irma Stern Museum, amidst concerns from a security and curatorial point of view, and awaited relocation to a more suitable location (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 7 December 2000).

The committee secretary contacted Ms Joan Rapp (Director of the University Libraries) regarding the possibility of hanging the above work in the library's reception area. However, Ms Rapp did not support the committee's proposal, claiming that the overtly religious text and imagery made the painting unsuitable for the library (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 26 February 2001). Ms Rapp was invited to elaborate on her statement to the committee, where she claimed the display of this work would be prejudicial against other religions, which were not afforded the same visual representation. She considered that the work did not suggest a spirit of enquiry or the pursuit of academic freedom and that it therefore clashed with the ideals of the building (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 26 February 2001).

In response to Ms Rapp's objections, members were obliged to consider the issues of principle involved. Although the committee recognised that the meaning and subject matter of the painting were not 'neutral', and that the context of its intended display (particularly in isolation) could promote controversy, they called attention to other values, such as the aesthetic and patrimonial, which should be considered in addition to the ideological and historical context of the picture (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 26 February 2001). The committee was mindful that

objection to the content of a work of art had to be carefully measured, lest it be perceived as censorship (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 26 February 2001).

Religion was acknowledged to be an important part of life, evidenced in the existence of a rich tradition in the history of art of religious artworks. Ms Rapp responded that she had no objection to religious art *per se*, but questioned the suitability of this particular context. The committee suggested one of the older parts of the library (such as the Jagger or Otto Beit building) but a compromise was not considered possible (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 26 February 2001). There were differing viewpoints on the role of the committee but, ultimately, it was noted that its role was to build a collection for the University of Cape Town in perpetuity (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 26 February 2001). Observing that serious artworks were often controversial, questioning the structures of power and making statements, the committee recognised that this task might, at times, involve artworks considered controversial. The committee commented that its role was not one of interior decorators and that it had to assume that its 'connoisseurship' was not undermined by the varying demands of the users of buildings (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 26 February 2001).

Another acquisition that ignited controversy, this time within the committee itself, was the purchase of the assemblage by the sculptor, Willie Bester. The subject matter of the work, *Saartjie Baartman*, was highly volatile. In 1810, a

young Khoi woman by the name of Saartjie Baartman, was persuaded to travel to Europe. There, she was considered as no more than an anthropologically abnormal specimen, and she was placed on exhibition as a sexual curiosity. Known as the 'Hottentot Venus', her likeness was widely reproduced as she became the object of racially-motivated scientific and medical research. After her death in 1816, the Musee de l'Homme in Paris had a cast taken of her body, removed her skeleton, and preserved her brain and genitalia for its collection.

Professor Skotnes lodged an objection to the fact that the work had been purchased, but that as a committee member she had neither been party to the decision, nor had she even been informed about it. The chair responded that unanimity had been reached regarding the desired purchase of a work by this artist, and when the opportunity arose, in Professor Skotnes's absence, the remainder of the committee had been in agreement, despite the contentious subject matter. The incident inspired Prof. Skotnes to write a formal letter of complaint to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Mr Wieland Givers, in order to voice her concerns as to the manner in which the committee functioned. As well as reiterating the need for a gallery, the impact of the lack of an acquisition policy on the coherence of the collection, and the practical consideration involved in implementing the one-percent guideline, Skotnes also revealed her dissatisfaction with the composition of the committee itself; which inclined towards the middle-aged, male, and white demographic and was furthermore lacking in art expertise

In any event, the sculpture was ‘temporarily’ positioned at the top of the stairs leading to the Science and Engineering Library (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 26 April 2001). A printed statement was placed in position until consensus has been reached regarding the final positioning of the work. In an unprecedented turn of events, a public debate was staged on Monday the 30th of April, in the Centre for African Studies. The discussion was titled, ‘Celebration or Scandal?’ and was organised by the African Gender Institute, Centre for African Studies and the UCT Women’s Movement (University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee Minutes, 26 April 2001). The artist also agreed to participate in the panel discussion to elaborate on the ideas behind the work, and hear the disparate public responses that it has generated. Yvette Abrahams, a local historian and specialist on Baartman’s life, as well as representatives of the UCT Women’s Movement and the UCT Works of Art Committee (represented by the chair, Mr Amooore) were invited to participate, while Professor Amina Mama of the African Gender Institute chaired the discussion.⁷⁹

Institutional culture is generally understood to refer to those established customs, practices and discourse that a university might take for granted. It is the power of this self-evidence, rather than any consciously undertaken acts of cultural exclusion that resulted in a collection which unconsciously privileged certain critical positions, media, and aesthetic approaches, whilst devaluing others. A university’s dominant culture may view these simply as manifestations

⁷⁹ Once more, it is in the presence of controversy that the Works of Art Committee exercised its potential role as an interlocutor, allowing the collection to develop or engage in discussion. In this space it allows the artwork to stimulate debate and invites the opportunity for various points of view to be expressed.

of the normative, but which in fact 'privilege those who are white, male, heterosexual and middle-class, while marginalising those who are not' (Schmahmann, 2013: 9).

The committee plays a central role in this process, because its custodial practice tends to advance a positive critical reception to the works. Without negating the existence of varying levels of artistic talent, these flashpoints of controversy draw attention to the unequal values attributed to different artistic and cultural dispositions. However, it may also indicate a failing in the collection's strategy of display, which prescribes the experience of the art collection upon its own communities but does not provide for the mediation of this experience for the audience.

Since the early 20th century, artists have been critiquing the role of the 'museum' as mediator in creating and sustaining the notion of the cultural 'gate-keeper', dividing those who have access from those without (King & Marstine, 2006: 268). In response, there has been a growing trend in collection-museum practice towards the minimal interpretation of objects or, in some cases, the total absence of interpretation. Amongst other motivations, this has been ascribed to the modernist view of the transcendent art object, or alternatively, as a renewed desire on the part of museums to return to the concept of the 'cabinet' in order to inspire a sense of wonder in its audience. However, the responsibilities to the public in an 'open' gallery may be more nuanced.

A supposedly 'unmediated' encounter is often imagined to inspire feelings of awe and greater personal reflection through the possibility of multiple, unfixed interpretations. Whether by default or design, the university's Permanent Works of Art Collection had, by this stage, adopted a congruous approach. Works of art were (and remain), irregularly accompanied by explanatory labels, detailing varying information about the artist, the work and/or aspects of its provenance. Because the identification, contextualisation and arrangement of the art objects were, and continue to be, opaque, viewers might be encouraged to generate independent interpretations of the works and the relationships between them.

However, this strategy also presents the potential for viewers to experience the opposite effect to that which had been intended; and the lack of interpretation and authoritative information may leave viewers feeling excluded, frustrated or bewildered by their encounter with a work of art (Lord, 2006: 80). Because the strategies for the identification, contextualisation and arrangement of the art objects in this collection are somewhat opaque, users of the spaces in which the works of art are situated may feel excluded and frustrated by these encounters to an even greater extent than they would be as intentional viewers of art within the confines of a space demarcated for this experience.

Curating the University

Exhibiting is the curatorial activity of *ordering* a collection. While a collection may have been composed according to a sequence or system, collecting itself does not imply order; it simply refers to the selective acquisition and preservation which condition its act of *possession* (Camnitzer, 2011). The function of exhibiting is thus what distinguishes the ‘curator-conservator’ from the ‘curator-exhibitor’, and by implication, the collection from the museum or gallery. Once an order is imposed upon a collection, the significance of its possession, and thus its ownership, becomes secondary to the carefully formulated idea or argument behind the order. In this way, ‘even authorship may become irrelevant’ (Camnitzer, 2011). The curator places the collection in the context of a discourse and this curatorial ordering is performed in order to reveal something that wasn’t explicit before the order was proposed. In other words, curatorship is implicitly instructive and in ordering a collection, the curator takes on the role of educator.

For this reason, temporary exhibited events have probably proved to be most effective in showcasing the contents of UCT’s permanent art collection to both the university community and the public. Arguably the most significant curatorial activity at the university to date has been the exhibition entitled, *Curiosity CLXXV: Curating the University*, held in Hiddingh Hall from November 2004 to April 2005. This project was initiated through the then vice-chancellor, Professor Ndebele, who had approached Professor Pippa Skotnes, then director of the Michaelis School of Fine Art, to request the department for a contribution towards the celebration of the university’s 175th anniversary.

As McDonald and Méthot contend, commemorative celebrations like centenaries 'focus the public imagination on the significance of past events or established institutions' (2006: 308). Although their analysis of the historiography of anniversary celebrations specifically addresses national centennials, the same principles may be applied to university celebrations (McDonald & Méthot, 2006). Just as nations observe significant dates in their histories, revealing their construction of self-image and promoting patriotism, university commemorative celebrations similarly serve to solidify their identity and foster institutional loyalty (Kozak, 2007: 144). As Lourenço writes:

Although universities often use their historical record as an argument for social and academic legitimacy, they generally only mobilise resources for the study and preservation of their heritage – through publications or exhibitions – at times of special commemorations (2005: 80).

In honour of this event, Professor Pippa Skotnes consulted with past Michaelis graduate, Gwen van Embden, and fellow lecturer, Fritha Langerman. Together, the three master printmakers shouldered the responsibility to curate an exhibition that showcased the university's identity and heritage. The approach to the curatorship of this exhibition differed to that adopted toward the custodianship of the university's collections in many respects, particularly the ways in which it demonstrated an understanding of the unique potential of objects and collections to trace the historical development of knowledge and teaching at the university.

Curiosity comprised 175 cabinets containing seemingly disparate objects from various departments throughout the university. Echoing the language of the 'cabinets of curiosity' belonging to past collector-researchers, and the origins of the university collection itself, the institution's objects were re-interpreted and imagined through the discipline of fine art. From all corners of the university, the curators sought out examples of ways in which the disciplines were visualised; from historical artefacts, obsolete teaching equipment, treasures of bygone days and unique research materials, to academic paraphernalia. These were brought together under a new taxonomy⁸⁰ in an installation at UCT's original campus, which remains the home of the Michaelis School of Fine Art. The exhibition explored concepts including the curator as artist, museology, installation art, and book-making (Murray, 2005). More importantly, at least for the purposes of this study, it represented an investigation into the curious nature of scholarship at the university and what exactly art *is* (Murray, 2005).

The exhibition was divided into three bodies of work. The first consisted of an assembly of cases created by artists who either currently, or had previously, had some connection to UCT. The second was a series of four works created by the curators, *Filing the Archive*, *Place Holders*, *175 Chalkboard Dusters* and *References*, which provided a structure for the exhibition and referred to the activities considered to be central to the concept of a university (Skotnes et al., 2004: 11). The third body of work was published as an accompaniment to the exhibition, *Curiosity CLXXV: A Paper Cabinet* (Skotnes et al., 2004), which is described as

⁸⁰ With alphabetic classifications such as 'Astonishment', 'Censorship', 'Diversity', 'Forensics', 'Libraries', 'Memory', 'Resonances' and 'Wonder' (Skotnes et al., 2004).

neither a book nor catalogue, but rather as a curated collection of the images and texts that had been assembled in the preparation of the exhibition (Skotnes et al., 2004: 9). In it, the curators remark:

Right from the beginning it was clear that UCT does not have a ‘culture’ of collecting and curating. While there are some established collections like the Drennan Anatomy Museum, the Bolus Herbarium and, of course, the libraries that are cared for by dedicated curators and librarians, there are uncurated collections in almost all departments. Most of these do not have keepers and much has been lost or destroyed over the years for want of proper attention and adequate funding. There were a number of places we arrived at only to be told that the whole storeroom had been cleared out and all the ‘old stuff’ thrown away. In some, old teaching collections or small museums were shut down and their contents decaying. In the end, it would be true to say that what we worked with in much of this exhibition is the left-over (Skotnes et al., 2004: 10)

Despite a ‘generational’ prejudice (Langerman, 2013) that resulted in many defunct objects being discarded, a number of objects were recognised as valuable by certain individuals at the university and stored. Like those remnants, the *Curiosity* cabinets, along with the publication, serve as lasting relics that testify to the exhibition. *Curiosity* provided a platform to engage with ideas and insights, bridge disciplines and nurture curiosity, in the hope that this act of curatorship would generate new ideas about UCT collections, as well as to mark a shift in UCT’s understanding of the role of art within the university arena. To some extent, this endeavour was successful. The exhibition garnered great public interest, attracting a wide audience and leaving lasting traces on the parent institution.

For instance, in response to the *Curiosity* exhibition, the UCT Chemistry Department began to intentionally set aside certain objects for the express purpose of display, reflecting a renewed appreciation for the visual and a desire to represent, or signal, their surroundings within the university, regarding the nature of the discipline concerned (Langerman, 2013). For this reason, Fritha Langerman was commissioned by the UCT Works of Art committee to produce an installation for the Chemistry Department's PD Hahn building, to coincide with the celebration of 125 years of women on campus.⁸¹ In August of 2011, Langerman completed an installation of cabinets in the entrance hall, collectively titled *Stoicheia*.⁸² The cabinets are located at the PD Hahn south-side entrance and acknowledge Hahn, the man, his instrumental role in admission of women to UCT, the building itself, as well as the history of chemistry at UCT (Langerman, 2013). The installation was met with enthusiastic response.⁸³ Langerman was also invited to create installations in the Pharmacology, Pathology, and Public Health Departments at the University of Cape Town.

Similarly, in October 2012, Professor Skotnes was invited to perform a curatorial intervention on behalf of the UCT Archaeology Department with material from its storerooms, as well as from the personal collections of members of staff. As a result, the Beattie Building foyer on the third floor was transformed into a permanent exhibition about the department ("Archaeological History on

⁸¹ Yet another commemorative event; women were first registered as students in 1886/7 when four female students of the Good Hope Seminary signed up for Professor P.D. Hahn's class chemistry at the South African College, later known as UCT ("Celebrating 125 Years...", 2011).

⁸² From the Greek word for 'elements' or 'principles', meaning units that become part of a more complex whole (Langerman, 2013).

⁸³ Barring the Department of Statistics, also represented in the building, which expressed concern at being excluded (Langerman, 2013).

Exhibit”, 2012). This installation includes and engages with fieldwork-archives and the interpretation and curation of its objects (“Archaeological History on Exhibit”, 2012). More recently, Skotnes completed another commission in the PD Hahn Building in May 2013. The installation, entitled *Breath*, is a manifold work of art that engages with the discipline, history and practices of the recently relocated department of Psychology (Anderson, 2013).

Other exhibitions include *A Conversation with the Bolus Collection: science, sensibility, sensuality*, a temporary exhibition hosted at the upper Michaelis Gallery, and curated by Nadja Daehnke. In September 2011, this intimate exhibition was held in ‘conversation’ with another exhibition *Harry Bolus (1834–1911): A Living Legacy - Cape Cameo Collection* by Mary van Blommestein for the university’s Botany Department on Upper Campus, to mark the centenary of the Bolus Bequest. While the Botany Department exhibition, accompanied by a series of lectures, focused on the botanical importance and methodology behind the Bolus Herbarium, the Michaelis exhibition considered the aesthetic merit of the wider Bolus collection (Archive and Curatorship, 2012).

A Conversation with the Bolus Collection incorporated a selection of contemporary artworks to resonate with the manuscripts, art and other objects that form the Bolus bequest⁸⁴ so as to reflect more broadly on the character of the amateur scientist, his context, and, especially, the scientific endeavour of ‘capturing the

⁸⁴ A focus-piece of the exhibition was *The Gates of Heaven Shall be Opened*, also known as *The Doors of Mercy*, a Pre-Raphaelite work by Arthur Hughes. This painting, purchased by a public subscription organised by Harry Bolus, invokes a typically Victorian urge for sensual or religious excess (Archive and Curatorship, 2012).

world' (Archive and Curatorship (ARC), University of Cape Town, 2012). The exhibition's subtitle, *Science, Sensibility, Sensuality* was suggestive of three different modes of seeing: 'the scientific gaze of collecting, taxonomy and recording; the sensibility of minute observations required by botanical artists; and sensuality / sexuality which is often reflected through the symbolism of flowers' (Archive and Curatorship, 2012).

Only one temporary exhibition has specifically engaged with the UCT Permanent Works of Art Collection, namely, *Finding UCT: Narratives New and Old in the UCT Permanent Collection*. The exhibition, held in the modest gallery at the Centre for African Studies from September to October 2007, included selected works sourced from the collection, gathered together for the first time in a single space. This exhibition thus drew particular focus to the works singled out for the show and offered them a significance that they rarely encountered in their usual sites of display (Tietze, 2007).

Curated by Clare Butcher and Linda Stupart, then students of the university, the artworks were chosen and arranged according to thematic niches, appearing at the same time both whimsical and carefully considered. This constellation of chosen works allowed for the introduction of unexpected relationships between art objects, which were otherwise unlike and usually geographically separated. This resulted in new dimensions of meaning between the works of the collection, extending beyond mere content. Unfamiliar works were made approachable, while new routes were mapped to already familiar works.

As Anna Tietze noted in her insightful review (2007), the exhibition made visible certain patterns within the overall collection. It revealed an early acquisition policy motivated by an attitude of 'colonial deference' to 'reinforce notions of civilised behaviour, worthy conduct and ideal nature' (Tietze, 2007). The exhibition suggested that this later gave way to a policy of buying work so as to affirm UCT's South African cultural heritage, and which was later driven by a desire to challenge hierarchies of value, regarding people, place and even artistic method (Tietze, 2007). In this way, the exhibition was perhaps torn between the two conflicting motivations; as a means of opening up suggestive parallels between disparate works (in a range of media and over a fairly broad chronological period) as well as an attempt to demonstrate how the university's shifting expression of value judgements regarding art, its *taste*, has changed over the past 70 or so years (Tietze, 2007). The exhibition spoke about 'how UCT represents itself to itself, how it values its collections, and how artwork marks a particular time in history and sets that time up against our own, among others,' said Skotnes (Quoted in "Finding UCT", 2007).

Access to its collection could be said to grant access to the thinking and teaching of the university itself. A collection may serve this purpose in many ways; as an expression of the academic institution's notion of education; through the nostalgic monumentalisation of certain individuals or events deemed significant to the university's desired history; the creation of a particular aesthetic on a campus; the embodiment or reflection of the intellectual and creative mission of the institution; as well as endeavouring to foster and represent a particular community 'spirit'.

From the *Curiosity* exhibition onwards, it is possible to trace a shift in interest towards curatorship within the university's fine art department,⁸⁵ and which reaches beyond the confines of the discipline.⁸⁶ As shown, a number of practising artists at the institution have been involved in this process of deeming collections, as well as curating those already in existence. In June of 2010, this engagement became academically acknowledged when the *Archive and Curatorship: the Visual University and its Columbarium* (ARC) programme was initiated as a strategic focus at UCT. It was anchored by two existing, complementary projects, the *Centre for Curating the Archive* (CCA), directed by Professor Pippa Skotnes, and the NRF Chair in *Archive and Public Culture* (APC), headed by Professor Carolyn Hamilton. This increased scholarly attention paid to aspects of curating at UCT, particularly within its fine art department, may be seen to have culminated in the launch its Honours in Curatorship programme, through the CCA of the Michaelis School of Fine Art, in January of 2013. Held in close collaboration with the Iziko Museums of South Africa, the programme offers courses in the theory and practice of curatorship. It aims to develop in its students a sophisticated awareness of the practicalities, politics and poetics of working with collections of many kinds.

Many of the projects mentioned above serve to illustrate the ARC's mandate to draw material out of the university's columbarium and interrogate disciplines,

⁸⁵ This renewed interest corresponds with a global ascendance of curatorship as critical practice, since the 1990s (O'Neill, 2010: 241).

⁸⁶ For instance, the *Finding UCT* exhibition by students in Art History.

their practitioners and visual methodologies through the act of curation. To do so means reconsidering objects and retrieving them from their untouched state in the dusty desks, nooks and storerooms of the university. Many of these objects may appear banal, 'left-overs' (Skotnes et al., 2004), as much a part of the dust from which they were recovered.

On 'Ethics' & 'Dust'

Dust is found in all things, whether solid, liquid or vaporous; it even populates the void amongst the stars. Dust is sometimes quite beautiful, as seen in a sprinkling of sparkling gold dust, the shimmer of confectioner's sugar, or in gently spinning, glittering particles suspended in a beam of sunlight. It sometimes disgusts; domestic dust is, after all, comprised largely of the corpses and excrement of dust mites, combined with the keratin from desiccated human skin cells, as well as shed remnants of textile fibres and other organic matter. Dust may even be noxious, with the ability to choke life. Asbestos, radioactive dusts, pesticides and other poisonous smokes are often produced through industry or warfare. Dust is also indispensable. It is partly responsible for the formation of rain-clouds and the nourishment of our soil (Holmes, 2001: 8). Its presence in our atmosphere plays a role in controlling the earth's climate, as well as our perception of light. Dust gives us sunsets.

A mote of dust is typically defined as solid particulate matter, having a diameter within a range of 63 micrometres or less (Holmes, 2001: 3), although this is dependent upon the 'type' of dust in question. A micrometer, also known as a micron, is a metric unit of measurement denoting one millionth of a metre in length. Therefore, a common speck of dust is less than 0.063 mm across, while most dust particles are considerably smaller. For comparison, a full-stop punctuation mark, such as the one at the end of this sentence, is five times broader than the very largest dust particle, at approximately 315 microns in diameter. Dust lies at the very edge of human visibility; it is the smallest thing

that the eye can possibly see, unaided.⁸⁷ For generations, dust particles were the ‘first and most common measure of smallness’ (Amato, 2000: 3), the most miniscule objects imaginable, marking the boundary of an invisible world.

Dust is a curious substance. Rather than a material in its own right, possessing a set of unique characteristics, dust might instead be said to refer to a *condition* (Manaugh, 2008). It is found everywhere, because it is comprised of *everything*; fragments of a ‘disintegrating world’ (Holmes, 2001: 1). It is the ‘result of the divisibility of matter’ (Amato, 2000: 3) and has its origins in as far-flung places as the collapse of stars, the scales from the wings of a butterfly, desert sands, pollen, long-dead kings. Dust is a collection, an archive of miscellanea. It is formed from an ineffable compound of ingredients and does not discriminate between mite faeces and crushed diamonds. But although it bears traces of precious things, dust has come to be associated only with the most humble. The true identities of these fragments of objects, which have powdered, decomposed, and otherwise transformed, are no longer discernible.

Attitudes to dust differ according to time and culture. In the West, dust was once associated with the comfortable, the sheltered interior, subject to order and control. Dust was perceived as an element which preserved history, measuring out time as it settled and slowly accumulated, and thus reverently signifying the age of an object. Later came a disturbance of order which demanded the removal of dust. In England, Edwin Chadwick was the author of the 1842 publication,

⁸⁷ The human eye can distinguish particles to a size of about 40 microns in diameter.

Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain, which initiated reform against dust as a threat to cleanliness and hygiene, and ushered in a campaign of aesthetic sanitisation (Cleere, 2002: 116). ‘Dust’ here took on the role of transitive verb, ‘to dust’, the cleansing of a room of intrusive particles. The word is a contranym, holding within itself one meaning as well as its apparent opposite, both the unsettling and making of dust, ‘to cleanse of’ and ‘to sprinkle with’ (Steedman, 2002: 161).

These shifts in prevailing cultural opinion were responsible for one of the most controversial conservation events in modern history, the ‘Picture-Cleaning Scandal’ at Trafalgar Square. In 1846, a series of paintings in the British National Gallery were cleaned under the direction of then keeper, Sir Charles Eastlake. The once revered ‘patina of age’ that had previously been seen to enhance the surfaces of the ancient paintings⁸⁸ was rejected as common dirt, and the dust was banished with soap and water. In 1847, a Select Committee on the Fine Arts was formed as a public enquiry to investigate charges that the custodians had ‘destroyed’ the paintings through their act of conservation-restoration (Anderson, 2004). Instead, the process was defended not as an aesthetic position, but a scientific one, and the debate was shifted from values about appreciation, tone, colour, and perspective, to one of hygiene (Cleere, 2002: 127).

88 So much so, that previous keepers, including Sir George Beaumont (a wealthy connoisseur and art patron, whose donation of his private collection of Old Masters paintings to the nation essentially inaugurated what would become the National Gallery, were in the habit of applying a mixture of liquorice water and brown glaze to the Old Masters in order to ensure that they were ‘well-toned’ (Cleere, 2002: 130).

This attitude has persisted into the present. The mysterious realm of dust has been made known to us by scientific apparatus, and the discoveries of infinitesimally smaller objects in our world have relegated dust to the fringes. Dust is swept to the edges of society, culture and even the edge of our collective consciousness. It continues to be polished off of surfaces and from within the white cube, edited out from glossy reproductions; ‘dust is made to disappear’ (Stoppani, 2007: 437). Nowadays, dust denotes neither value nor respectability. It communicates a greater dimension than simply ‘uncleanliness’; it represents entropy, the lack of control.

This thesis has borrowed and corrupted the title from a peculiar series of lectures that John Ruskin, the English draughtsman and art writer, published in 1865, *The Ethics of the Dust: ten lectures to little housewives on the elements of crystallisation*.⁸⁹ Throughout his essay, Ruskin outlines his appreciation for the virtues and values of ancient buildings, which were further developed in later, more well-known works; *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, followed by *The Stones of Venice*. Ruskin was initially counted among Chadwick’s disciples, whose ideas served as an aesthetic, even ethical, justification for preferring Turner’s high

⁸⁹ Uniquely among Ruskin’s oeuvre, *Ethics of the Dust* takes the form of ten dramatic dialogues, after the Socratic model and performs, at least in part, as a record of his role as mentor and teacher at Winnington Hall, a girls’ school in Cheshire. Taking the nature and growth of crystals as its theme, Ruskin recounts fictionalised conversations between the Lecturer and twelve schoolgirls, ranging from nine to twenty years of age. The topics of discussion range from art to domestic economy, education, theology and mythology (Birch, 1989: 147).

tonalities over the Old Masters' dim chiaroscuro.⁹⁰ Throughout his *Modern Painters*, the first volume of which was published a year after the *Sanitary Report*, Ruskin adopts contradictory positions toward the aesthetic philosophy Chadwick proposed. He variously 'regrets a tendency towards cloudiness in modern landscape painting' while approving of indistinction as an aesthetic value (Dillon, 2009).

At the time, Victorian England was developing its knowledge of ancient Egypt (and to a lesser extent, ancient Assyria) which brought about renewed imaginations of relics and remains, particularly with regard to the archive. In the context of the archaeological recovery of fragments from the ancient Near East, authors were rethinking their own dominant mediums of memory, and the losses to which they were prone (Stauffer, 2007: Paragraph 20). In the midst of these concerns, Ruskin is considered a founder of conservation theory and it is in *Ethics of the Dust* that Ruskin articulates an intriguing approach; that dust possesses value that, when ingrained into an object, becomes an intimate constituent of its history. These dialogues suggest a morality born of the material and metaphorical potential of the dust, a tendency of the particles of a degraded world to refine toward purity and integrity.

In considering this university art collection, and in conversation around the importance of conservation-restoration, it is easy for dust to function as a mere

⁹⁰ A small irony that Turner's paintings were informed by the unprecedented effluvia present in the Victorian urban landscape, a veil of dust. 'Layered with the soot of countless coal fires, dusted with the deposits of industry, smeared everywhere with traces of the human and animal faeces that fouled the air in dry weather and the feet of pedestrians in wet' (Dillon, 2009).

trope of neglect. However, I believe that there is dynamic potential to be discovered by reading the University of Cape Town Permanent Works of Art Collection through the condition of 'dust'. The metaphor captures a sense in which the collection is disassociated from any museum or gallery, porous and open across the university communities and disciplines, albeit to differing degrees. It pervades and penetrates offices, lecture theatres, foyers and public spaces; knowing no interior or exterior. And, as with dust, this collection is distinguished by heterogeneity, fragmentation, the absence of a whole.

Exhibitions like *Curiosity* represent the decision to bring the collection, so much dust, to the fore-front and to intentionally see and examine it. By 'dusting off' the university's collections from the everyday dullness, these interventions give the university's communities and the greater public the opportunity to recognise their value and meaning (Dillon, 2009). Regarding the UCT Works of Art Collection, I propose that it is this activity of *curatorship* which has the potential to fulfil the potentiality of dust that Ruskin first described, by which it may be possible to reorganise and restructure the meanings and perception of the production of fine art at the university.

Here, 'curatorship' refers to the responsibilities of both the 'curator-conservator' and the 'curator-exhibitor', which together form a critical practice. In one sense, this research project itself represents a small, singular act of curation, involving the careful and tender selection and arrangement of knowledge gleaned from the university's Permanent Works of Art Collection. The undertaking of this research (alongside other interventions by Franzidis, Butcher and Stupart),

serves to activate the collection intellectually and to imbue its objects once more with *relevance* to the academic project.

Conclusion

This project has sought to provide a history of the changing relevance and status of the University of Cape Town Permanent Works of Art Collection's. Chapter 1 offered a brief history of universities in general, and the development of their collections, providing a broad understanding of what university collections are and what functions they serve. In this chapter, I established that universities have collected works of art from their earliest beginnings, and that the art collection had thus become a normative symbol in the European tradition of the university. It was found that the prevailing historical and contemporary model of the university collection bears a strong administrative association with, and responsibility to, the mission of its parent institution, through the 'triple mission' of education, research and public display.

Chapter 2 focused on the University of Cape Town and argued that, as a young institution at the tip of Africa, it was ideologically rooted in a colonial deference to the presumed superiority of European traditions, and sought to establish itself accordingly. UCT was therefore predisposed to conform to established strategies of constructing built and material heritage, so as to project its imagined or desired vision of institutional identity; a modern university in the Anglo-Germanic liberal tradition. The inclusion of artworks into the academic built environment, which imitated the collections that had, over time, become symbols of cultural prestige favoured by the elite institutions of Europe, thus served to identify and validate the 'type' of education offered by the institution. Exposure

to works of art was also expected to refine the university community's appreciation of the arts, culture, curiosity and creativity.

This chapter also established how the University of Cape Town steadily accumulated its collection of artworks, displayed across its various buildings and campuses. The university's incorporation of the Cape Town School of Art, as the Michaelis School of Fine Art under Wheatley in 1925, attracted further, substantial donations to the growing collection of art objects. However, it was only in response to a potential bequest by Prof. Charles Manning in 1977 that the university's various treasures and *objets d'art* (including a number of artworks from earlier bequests by Mr Harry Bolus, Mons. Frederick Charles Kolbe and Mr Alfred Aaron de Pass) were formally deemed to constitute the Permanent Works of Art Collection.

While there had been an initial connection between the development of the collection and the discipline of Fine Art at UCT, the university's continued acquisition, possession and storage of artworks were not obviously driven by the 'triple mission' of university collections. Over the course of the first decade of its history, the university's opportunistic acquisition strategy instead resulted in a collection comprising artworks predominantly by South African artists, particularly those which served to advance the significant figures and achievements of its parent institution. I argued that, in this way, the collection may be seen to have entered an 'affirmatory phase', where the works were intended to possess a primarily emblematic (historically or culturally relevant) value for the university. The collection therefore deviated from the more typical

function of the university gallery or museum as a site and means of scholarship (such as that of the university library), and as a result of the lack of any clear relationship between the collection and fine art department, the works of art became perceived as primarily 'decorative'. This, in turn, compromised the collection's ability to contribute to either the mission of the university or the more conceptual concerns of the discipline at UCT.

The Works of Art Committee has been charged with custodianship and administration of the collection ever since the committee's inception in 1978, and has actively developed the collection through an annual acquisition budget and the implementation of a one-percent guideline, which allocated capital from building development to the deliberate purchase of artwork. In the thirty-six years since its introduction, the committee has encountered and managed, with varying degrees of success, a number of difficulties and conflicts arising with regard to its acquisitions strategy, the distinction between archival and artistic material, the security of the collection and the conservation of artworks, as well as different forms of damage to its collection; from vandalism and neglect to accidental harm resulting from inadequate storage conditions and well-meaning 'restorations'. The committee has also frequently met with complications regarding the display of artworks in such a complex and dispersed site, which emphasise the problematics of inserting works of art into the space of the university.

These points of contestation stimulated debate within the university and have prompted the beginning of intellectual engagement with the collection regarding

its purpose within the institution. It is principally the committee's failure to engage critically with the collection's role and relationship to the discipline that has meant that its value for a modern South African institution such as UCT remains unclear. Furthermore, the committee has been thus far unsuccessful in motivating for the construction of a dedicated gallery, which finds the contents of the collection dispersed across the various campuses and buildings. This current strategy of display, including the poor mediation between artworks and the university communities, continues to reinforce the collection's symbolic role, while having a negative bearing upon not only the perception of fine art as an academic discipline within the institution, but also the materiality of its art objects. Despite the university's claims to the collection being a 'living' or 'open gallery' (McEvoy, 2011), the twin curatorial activities of 'conservation' and 'exhibition' remain almost entirely absent.

In chapter 5, I demonstrated that, in contrast, several temporary exhibitions (commencing with the Curiosity CLXXV exhibition in 2005), which have made use of artworks from the university's various collections (including the Permanent Works of Art Collection), have been more successful in showcasing the university's collections to both its internal communities and external publics. Through particular attention to the materiality of its objects, these exhibitions have served to emphasise the necessity of deliberate curatorship to unite theory and practice through a form of critical framework. In the case of the art collection, this would require a creative 'maintenance' to support ideas, dialogues and research. The new academic programmes in curatorship at UCT, for example, have already begun to exert pressure on the university to create

meaningful associations between the art collection and the academic discipline of fine art, as evidenced by this thesis (initiated as part of the Archive and Research and Archive and Public Culture initiatives).

The final section incorporates the scope of findings from the previous chapters regarding the role of the UCT art collection into a discussion of the concept of curatorship. In deeming the collection as archive, the thesis prompts the University of Cape Town to reflect critically on its role as curator, as well as the custodial responsibilities it has toward the material objects in its care. If the Works of Art Committee were to consider this approach with renewed seriousness, it would need to engage with the academic and creative developments within the discipline. In so doing, the University of Cape Town Permanent Works of Art Collection would have the potential to fulfil a role more closely aligned to the 'triple mission' of the university collection or museum, able to demonstrate its usefulness, and be assessed and valued for its contribution to the institution.

Bibliography

- Abt, J. 2011. The Origins of the Public Art Museum. In *A Companion to Museum Studies*. S. MacDonald. Ed. Malden, Massachusetts: Wiley-Blackwell. 114-134.
- Alexander, L. 1986. University Art Collections: their nature and validity. *De Arte*. (34): 33-35.
- Alsop, J. 1982. *The Rare Art Traditions: the history of art collecting and its linked phenomena wherever these have appeared*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Amato, J.A. 2000. *Dust: A History of the Small and the Invisible*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Anderson, J. 2004. The First Cleaning Controversy at the National Gallery, 1846-1853. In *Issues in the Conservation of Paintings*. D. Bomford & M. Leonard. Eds. Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute. 441-453.
- Anderson, P. 2013. Skotnes's Breath Takes Yours Away. *APC Gazette*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/gazette/archive/?id=125&t=int> [2013, August 12].
- Archaeological History on Exhibit. 2012. *Daily News (University of Cape Town)*. 8 October 2012. [Online]. Available: <https://www.uct.ac.za/dailynews/archives/?id=8265> [2014, January 16].
- Archive and Curatorship (ARC), University of Cape Town. 2012. *A Conversation with the Bolus Collection: science, sensibility, sensuality*. [Online]. Available: http://www.arc.uct.ac.za/the_visual_university/?lid=323 [2013, March 13].
- Aristides, N. 1988. Calm and Uncollected. *American Scholar*. 57(3): 327-336.
- Arnold-Forster, K. 2000. A Developing Sense of Crisis: a new look at university collections in the United Kingdom. *Museum International*. 52(3): 10-14.

- Arnold-Forster, K. & Weeks, J. 1999. *Minerals and Magic Lanterns: the university and college collections of the South West*. Somerset: South West Museums Council.
- Aviram, A. 1992. The Humanist Conception of the University: a framework for post-modern higher education. *European Journal of Education*. 27(4): 397-414.
- Barnes, S.V. 1996. England's Civic Universities and the Triumph of the Oxbridge Ideal. *History of Education Quarterly*. 36(3): 271-305.
- Baudrillard, J. 1994. The System of Collecting. In *The Cultures of Collecting*. J. Elsner & R. Cardinal. Eds. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. 7-24.
- Becker, R. & Keene, R. Eds. 2000. *Art Routes: a guide to South African art collections*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.
- Belk, R.W. 1994. Collectors and Collecting. In *Interpreting Objects and Collections*. S.M. Pearce. Ed. London: Routledge. 317-326.
- Belk, R.W. *et al.* 1991. Collecting in a Consumer Culture. *Highways and Buyways: Naturalistic Research from the Consumer Behavior Odyssey*. Association for Consumer Research. 178.
- Bender, T. 1988. *The University and the City: from medieval origins to the present*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bennett, T. 1995. *The Birth of the Museum: history, theory, politics*. London: Routledge.
- Bernstein, S. 1999. Goethe's Architectonic Bildung and Buildings in Classical Weimar. *MLN*. 114(5): 1014-1036.
- Beverungen, A., Dunne, S. & Sørensen, B.M. 2008. University, Failed (Editorial). *Ephemera: Theory and Politics in Organization*. 8(3): 232-237.

- Birch, D. 1989. The Ethics of the Dust: Ruskin's authorities. *Prose Studies: history, theory, criticism*. 12(2): 147-158.
- Black, C.C. 1984. Dilemma for Campus Museums: open door or ivory tower? *Museum Studies Journal*. 1(4): 20-23.
- Bourdieu, P. 1986. The Forms of Capital. In *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*. J.G. Richardson. Ed. New York, Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press. 241-258.
- Boylan, P.J. 1999. Universities and Museums: Past, Present and Future. *Museum Management and Curatorship*. 18(1): 43-56.
- Bradlow, F. 1981. The John and Charles Bell Heritage Trust. *The Jagger Journal*. (2): 16-29.
- Bulotaite, N. 2003. University heritage: an institutional tool for branding and marketing. *Higher Education in Europe*. 28(4): 449-454.
- Burman, L. 2005. University Museums as a Strategic Tool: on communicating university values. *Proceedings of Communicating University Museums. Awareness and Action - University Museums Today*. Uppsala, Sweden: UMAC. 17-20.
- Camnitzer, L. 2011. Museums and Universities. *E-Flux Journal*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/museums-and-universities/> [2013, October 23].
- Canadian Council of Archives. 1993. *Guidelines for Developing an Acquisition Policy*. [Online]. Available: http://aabc.ca/STORAGE/Toolkit_storage/Toolkit_files_old_linked/toolkit_guidelines_for_an_acquisition_policy.html [2013, March 3].
- Cardinal, R. 1994. Collecting and Collage-Making: the case of Kurt Schwitters. In *The Cultures of Collecting*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. 68-96.

- Carman, J. 2006. *Uplifting the Colonial Philistine: Florence Phillips and the making of the Johannesburg Art Gallery*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- Carrier, D. 2006. *Museum Skepticism: a history of the display of art in public galleries*. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press.
- Celebrating 125 Years of Women on Campus. 2011. *Daily News (University of Cape Town)*. [Online]. Available: <https://www.uct.ac.za/dailynews/women125/> [2013, August 12].
- Charlton, J. 2011. History of the Wits Art Museum. [Personal Interview, 24 June 2011]. Wits University, Johannesburg. (Unpublished)
- Cleere, E. 2002. Dirty Pictures: John Ruskin, modern painters, and the Victorian sanitation of fine art. *Representations*. 78(1): 116-139.
- Coleman, L.V. 1942. *College and University Museums: a message for college and university presidents*. Washington, D.C.: American Association of Museums.
- Collini, S. 2011. The Very Idea of the University [Public Lecture]. *10th Anniversary Lecture Series: The Idea of the University*. 11 October 2011. University of Cambridge: Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities.
- Davies, K.C. & Hull, J. 1976. *The Zoological Collections of the Oxford University Museum: a historical review and general account, with comprehensive donor index to the year 1975*. Oxford: Oxford University Museum.
- Davison, P. 2004. Things of Enchantment. In *Curiosity CLXXV: a paper cabinet*. P. Skotnes *et al.* Eds. Cape Town, South Africa: LLAREC, The Museum Workshop at the University of Cape Town. 14-15.
- de Clercq, S.W.G. 2006. Keeping for the Future. *Communicating University Museums. Awareness and Action: university museums today*. 25 September - 1 October 2005. S. Waltos, Ed. Krakow: Opuscula Musealia XV. 23.

- de Clercq, S.W.G. & Lourenço, M.C. 2003. A Globe is Just Another Tool: understanding the role of objects in university collections. *ICOM Study Series*. (11): 1-8.
- De La Fuente, E. 2010. The Artwork Made Me Do It: introduction to the new sociology of art. *Thesis Eleven*. 103(3): 3-9.
- Desvallées, A. & Mairesse, F. 2010. *Key Concepts of Museology*. Paris: Armand Colin and International Committee for Museology (ICOM).
- Dillon, B. 2009. A Dry Black Veil. *Cabinet*. (35). 19 May 2011. [Online]. Available: <http://cabinetmagazine.org/issues/35/dillon.php> [2012, April 28]
- Duffey, A., Riley-Nel, S., de Kamper, G. & Ernst, J. 2008. *The Art and Heritage Collections of the University of Pretoria*. Pretoria: University of Pretoria, Department of Arts UP.
- Duncan, C. 1991. Art Museums and the Ritual of Citizenship. In *Exhibiting Cultures: the politics and poetics of museum display*. I. Karp & S.D. Lavine. Eds. Washington: Smithsonian Institute. 88-103.
- Durost, W. 1932. *Children's Collecting Activity Related to Social Factors*. New York: Teacher's College, Columbia University.
- Efland, A. 1990. *A History of Art Education: intellectual and social currents in teaching the visual arts*. New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University.
- Elkins, J. 2001. *Why Art Cannot Be Taught: a handbook for art students*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Elkins, J. 2002. *Stories of Art*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Elsner, J. 1994. A Collector's Model of Desire: the house and museum of Sir John Soane. In *The Cultures of Collecting*. J. Elsner & R. Cardinal. Eds. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. 155-176.

- Elsner, J. & Cardinal, R. 1994. *The Cultures of Collecting*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Ericksen, H. & Unger, I. Eds. 2009. *The Small Museums Cataloguing Manual*. 4th Edition. Victoria: Museums Australia.
- Finding UCT. 2007. *Monday Paper (University of Cape Town)*. 26 (14). [Online]. Available: <https://www.uct.ac.za/mondaypaper/archives/?id=6546> [2012, April 28].
- Forgan, S. 2005. Building the Museum: knowledge, conflict and the power of place. *Isis*. 96(4): 572-585.
- Four Honorary Degrees for Grad. 2005. *Monday Paper (University of Cape Town)*. December 5, 2005. [Online]. Available: <http://www.uct.ac.za.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/mondaypaper/archives/?id=8586> [2011, April 28].
- Fowle, K. 2007. Who Cares? Understanding the Role of the Curator Today. In *Cautionary Tales: critical curating*. S. Rand & H. Kouris. Eds. New York: Apexart. 10-19.
- Fransen, H. 1978. *Guide to the Museums of Southern Africa*. Cape Town: Galvin & Sales, for the Southern African Museums Association.
- Franzidis, E. 2007. Hidden Treasures in Ivory Towers: the potential of university art collections in South Africa, with a case study of UCT. MA Thesis, Art Historical Studies. University of Cape Town, South Africa.
- Freedberg, D. 1985. *Iconoclasts and Their Motives*. Netherlands: Gary Schwartz Maarsssen.
- Freedberg, D. 1989. *The Power of Images: studies in the history and theory of response*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

- Freschi, F. 2009. The Wits Art Museum: the continent's foremost collection of African and southern African art: collecting and curating. *De Arte*. (80): 63-69.
- Gamboni, D. 2007. *The Destruction of Art: iconoclasm and vandalism since the French Revolution*. London: Reaktion Books.
- Garber, M. 2008. *Patronizing the Arts*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Gieysztor, A. 1992. Management and Resources. In *A History of the University in Europe*. W. Rüegg & H. de Ridder-Symoens, Eds. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 107-141.
- Giltrap, C. 2010. 20:20 Hindsight. Retrofitting research relevance to the University Art Collections at Trinity College Dublin. *University Museums and Collections Journal*. (3): 73-80.
- Glesne, C. 2012. Challenges and Conditions of Success for Campus Art Museums. In *The Campus Art Museum: a qualitative study*. [Report]. The Samuel H Kress Foundation.
- Hall, S. & Gieben, B. Eds. 1992. *Formations of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Hamilton, C. & Skotnes, P. 2014. Introductory Essay in *Uncertain Curature: in and out of the archive*. C. Hamilton and P. Skotnes. Eds. Cape Town: Jacana. [manuscript].
- Hamilton, J. 1995. The Role of the University Curator in the 1990s. *Museum Management and Curatorship*. 14(1): 73-79.
- Haskins, C.H. & Lewis, L.S. 2002. *The Rise of Universities*. [Reprint]. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction.
- Hill, M.D. 1966. The University Art Museum. *Curator*. 9(2): 114-118.

- Holmes, H. 2001. *The Secret Life of Dust: from the cosmos to the kitchen counter, the big consequences of little things*. Toronto: John Wiley & Sons.
- Horlacher, R. 2004. Bildung: a construction of a history of philosophy of education. *Studies in Philosophy and Education*. (23): 409-426.
- Hounsome, M.V. 1986. Zoological Collections of University Museums. In *A National Plan for Systematic Collections? Proceedings of a conference held at the National Museum of Wales in conjunction with the Biology Curators Group*. 6-9 July 1982. P.J. Morgan. Ed. Cardiff: National Museum of Wales. 29-33.
- Izevbaye, D. 2007. The Idea of the African University. *Social Dynamics*. 33(1): 217-220.
- Johnson, P. 2009. *Fundamentals of Collection Development and Management*. 2nd Edition. Chicago: American Library Association.
- Jones, F.F. 1967. The Art Museum, Princeton University. *Curator*. 10: 337-351.
- King, L. 2001. University Museums in the 21st Century: opening address. In *Managing University Museums*. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. 19-28.
- King, L. & Marstine, J. 2006. The University Museum and Gallery: a site for institutional critique and a focus of the curriculum. In *New Museum Theory and Practice: an introduction*. Malden and Oxford: Blackwell. 266-291.
- Kingsley, S. 2007. Owing Up: what it means to possess. *Metalsmith*. 27(3): 16-19.
- Kinsey, W.F. 1966. A College Museum and the Nature of its Community. 9: 106-113.
- Kozak, Z. 2007. Promoting the Past, Preserving the Future: British university heritage collections and identity marketing. Ph.D. Thesis. Museum and Gallery Studies, University of St. Andrew's.

- Kristeller, P.O. 1951. The Modern System of the Arts: a study in the history of aesthetics Part I. *Journal of the History of Ideas*. 12(4): 496-527. Available: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2707484> [2013, March 25].
- Langerman, F. 2013. The University of Cape Town Art Collection. [Personal Interview, 13 March 2013]. University of Cape Town, Cape Town. (Unpublished).
- Lord, B. 2006. Philosophy and the Museum: an introduction to the special issue. *Museum Management and Curatorship*. 21(2): 79-87.
- Lord, M. 2000. Editorial. *Museum International*. 52(2): 3.
- Lourenço, M.C. 2002. A Contribution to the History of University Museums and Collections in Europe. Proceedings from *Exposing and Exploiting the Distinct Character of University Museums and Collections*. 29 September - 4 October 2002. University Museums and Collections. International Council of Museums (ICOM).
- Lourenço, M.C. 2003. Contributions to the History of University Museums and Collections in Europe. *Museologia*. (3): 17-26.
- Lourenço, M.C. 2005. Between two worlds: The distinct nature and contemporary significance of university museums and collections in Europe. Ph.D. Thesis. Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers, Paris.
- Lourenço, M.C. & Stanbury, P. 2006. Tales from University Museums. *Opuscula Musealia*. 15: 11-16.
- Lowenthal, D. 1998. *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lydiate, Henry. 1982. Percentage for Art. *Artquest*. [Online]. Available: www.artquest.org.uk/articles/view/percentage-for-art [2014, September 12].

- MacDonald, S. 1970. *The History and Philosophy of Art Education*. Cambridge: The Lutterworth Press.
- MacGregor, A. 2001. The Ashmolean as a Museum of Natural History 1683-1860. *Journal of the History of Collections*. 13(2): 125-144.
- Manaugh, G. 2008. Mineral Kinships (Introduction). In *Library of Dust*. D. Maisel. Ed. San Francisco: Chronicle Books.
- Maylam, P. 2005. Rhodes University: colonialism, segregation and apartheid, 1904-1970. *African Sociological Review*. 9(1): 14-22.
- Maylam, P. 2007. Uplifting the Colonial Philistine: Florence Phillips and the making of the Johannesburg Art Gallery (Book Review). *De Arte*. (76): 70-71.
- McDonald, T. & Méthot, M. 2006. That Impulse that Bids a People to Honour its Past: the nature and purpose of centennial celebrations. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*. 12(4): 307-320.
- McEvoy, C. 2011. Dogwatch Sculpture Added to UCT's Living Museum. *Monday Paper (University of Cape Town)*. [Online]. 18 April 2011. Available: <http://www.uct.ac.za.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/mondaypaper/archives/?id=8586> [2011, April 28].
- McKim-Smith, G. 2002. The Rhetoric of Rape: the language of vandalism. *Woman's Art Journal*. 23(1): 29-36.
- Merriman, N. 2002. The Current State of Higher Education Museums, Galleries and Collections in the UK. *Museologia*. (2): 71-80.
- Michaelis School of Fine Art. c.1975. *Fifty years: Michaelis School of Fine Art*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town.

- Mitchell, W.J.T. 2005. Offending Images. In *What do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images*. W.J.T. Mitchell. Ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 125-144.
- Mitroiu, S. 2011. To Collect in Order to Survive: Benjamin and the necessity of collecting. *Cultura: international journal of philosophy of culture and axiology*. 8(1): 213-222.
- Morphew, C.C. & Hartley, M. 2006. Mission Statements: a thematic analysis of rhetoric across international type. *The Journal of Higher Education*. 77(3): 456-471.
- Morris, V. 2013. Leveraging the Brands of Campus Museums: opportunities and strategies. MA Thesis. Arts Management, American University, Washington D.C.
- Muñoz Viñas, S. 2005. *Contemporary Theory of Conservation*. Oxford: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Murray, P. 2005. Curiosity Preserved by UCT Collections. *Cape Times*. 21 January 2005: 12.
- Naidoo, R. 2014. Media Statement on the Directorship of Iziko SANG. *Art South Africa*. 8 May 2014 [online]. Available: <http://art-south-africa.com/220-news-articles-2013/2200-riason-naidoo-media-statement-on-the-directorship-of-iziko-sang.html> [2014, June 18].
- Nettleton, A., Charlton, J. & Rankin-Smith, F. 2003. *Engaging Modernities: transformations of the commonplace*. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand Art Galleries.
- Newman, J.H. & Turner, F.M. Eds. 1996. *The Idea of a University (Rethinking the Western Tradition)*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Olesen, M.N. 2009. *Bildung as a Powerful Tool in Modern University Teaching*. Forum on Public Policy Online: Oxford Round Table. [Online]. Available: <http://www.forumonpublicpolicy.com> [2011, September 12].

- O'Neill, P. 2010. The Curatorial Turn: from practice to discourse. In *The Biennial Reader: an anthology on large-scale perennial exhibitions of contemporary art*. E. Filipovic, M. Van Hal & S. Øvstebo. Eds. Bergen: Bergen Kunsthall. 240-259.
- Payne, M. & Murray, N. 2003. Draft Collections Development Policy (The UCT Works of Art Collection). (Unpublished).
- Pearce, S.M. 1995. *On Collecting: an investigation into collecting in the European tradition*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Pedersen, O. 1997. *The First Universities: Studium Generale and the Origins of University Education in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Perkin, H. 2006. History of Universities. *International Handbook of Higher Education*. 18: 159-205.
- Pettitt, C.W. 1997. The Cultural Impact of Natural Science Collections [Keynote address]. In *The Value and Valuation of Natural Science Collections: proceedings of the international conference, Manchester, 1995*. J.R. Nudds & C.W. Pettitt. Eds. Bath: The Geological Society. 95-103.
- Phillips, H. 1993. *The University of Cape Town 1918 - 1948: the formative years*. Cape Town, South Africa: University of Cape Town Press.
- Powell, J.D. 2007. Preserving the Unpreservable: a study of destruction art in the contemporary museum. MA Thesis. Museum Studies, University of Leicester, United Kingdom.
- Prior, N. 2002. *Museums and Modernity: art galleries and the making of modern culture*. Oxford: Berg.
- Readings, B. 1996. *The University in Ruins*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

- Rée, J. 2009. Auto-Icons. In *Conservation: principles, dilemmas and uncomfortable truths*. A. Richmond & A. Bracker, Eds. First Edition. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann. 1-5.
- Rodeck, H.G. 1950. Functions of University and College Museums. *Museum News*. 27(15): 7-8.
- Rodeck, H.G. 1952. Present Situation among College and University Museums. *Museum News*. 30 [January]: 4-6.
- Rorschach, K. & Semans, J.H. 2005. *Why Do Universities Have Museums?* Nasher Museum of Art, Duke University.
- Rüegg, W. & de Ridder-Symoens, H. Eds. 1992. *A History of the University in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ruthven, A.G. 1931. *A Naturalist in a University Museum*. Michigan: [Privately Printed: Alumni Press, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor].
- Schmahmann, B. 2009. Face-to-Face Negotiations: portraits of leaders at three South African universities. *De Arte*. (80): 14-36.
- Schmahmann, B. 2013. *Picturing Change: art and visual culture at universities in post-apartheid South Africa*. Johannesburg, South Africa: Wits University Press.
- Scott, J.C. 2006. The Mission of the University: medieval to postmodern transformations. *Journal of Higher Education*. 77(1): 1-39.
- Shapiro, T. et al. 2012. *Campus Art Museums in the 21st Century: a conversation*. University of Chicago: Cultural Policy Center.
- Shklovsky, V. 1965. Art as Technique. In *Russian Formalist Criticism: four essays*. L.T. Lemon & M. J. Reiss. Eds. Lincoln: University of Nebraska. 3-24.
- Skotnes, P. 1991. *Katrine Harries Print Cabinet Catalogue*. Cape Town: Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town.

- Skotnes, P. *et al.* 2004. *Curiosity CLXXV: a paper cabinet*. Cape Town, South Africa: LLAREC, The Museum Workshop at the University of Cape Town.
- Stauffer, A.M. 2007. Ruins of Paper: Dickens and the Necropolitan Library. *Romanticism and Victorianism on the Net* [online]. Available: <http://www.erudit.org/revue/ravon/2007/v/n47/016700ar.html?lang=en> [2011, September 12].
- Steedman, C. 2002. *Dust: the archive and cultural history*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.
- Stone, S.M. 1992. Documenting Collections. In *Manual of Curatorship: a guide to museum practice*. J.M.A. Thompson. Ed. 2nd Edition. London: Butterworth-Heinemann. 213-228.
- Stoppani, T. 2007. Dust Revolutions. Dust, informe, architecture (notes for a reading of Dust in Bataille). *The Journal of Architecture*. 12(4): 437-447.
- Strauss, D.L. 2006. The Bias of the World: curating After Szeemann & Hopps. *Brooklyn Rail: critical perspectives on arts, politics and culture*. Available: <http://brooklynrail.org/2006/12/art/the-bias-of-the-world> [2012, April 9].
- Swidler, A. 1986. Culture in Action: symbols and strategies. *American Sociological Review*. 51(2): 273-286.
- The Art of the Matter. 2005. *Monday Paper (University of Cape Town)*. 7 March 2005. [Online]. Available: <http://www.uct.ac.za/print/mondaypaper/archives/?id=4987> [2011, July 9].
- Thompson, J. 1992. The Role of the Director. In *Manual of Curatorship: a guide to museum practice*. J.M.A. Thompson. Ed. 2nd Edition. London: Butterworth-Heinemann. 133-141.

- Tietze, A. 2007. Finding UCT: narratives new and old in the UCT permanent collection. *Artthrob*. (123). [Online]. Available: <http://www.artthrob.co.za/07nov/reviews/uct.html> [2011, June 2].
- Tirrell, P.B. 2002. The University Museum as a Social Enterprise. *Museologia*. 2: 119-132.
- University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee. [Meeting Agendas & Minutes]. 1978-2014. (Unpublished).
- University of Cape Town. 2009. *Committee and Working Group Manual and Membership [01 July 2008 to 30 June 2012]*. Cape Town: The University of Cape Town [Office of the Registrar].
- University of Cape Town Council. Minutes. UCT Administrative Archive. (Unpublished).
- University of Cape Town Planning Committee. Minutes. UCT Administrative Archive. (Unpublished).
- University of Oslo [Humanities Studies in Education] 2011. *Bildung / Education*. Available: <http://www.uv.uio.no/english/research/subjects/bildung/bildung-education.html> [2013, May 7].
- University of the Witwatersrand. 2013. *History of WAM (Wits Arts Museum)*. Available: http://www.wits.ac.za/witsartmuseum/15906/our_history.html [2012, August 21].
- van Blommestein, M. 2013. The University of Cape Town Works of Art Committee [Personal Correspondence by E-mail]. (Unpublished).
- Veblen, T. 2006. *Distinction: the theory of the leisure class*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Wæraas, A. & Solbakk, M.N. 2009. Defining the Essence of a University: lessons from higher education branding. *Higher Education*. (57): 449-462.
- Warhurst, A. 1986. Triple Crisis in University Museums. *Museums Journal*. (86): 137-140.
- Warhurst, A. 1984. University Museums. In *Manual of Curatorship: a guide to museum practice*. J.M.A. Thomson. Ed. 2nd Edition. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann. 93-100.
- Weeks, J. 2000. The Loneliness of the University Museum Curator. *Museum International*. 52(2): 10-14.
- Weintraub, I. 2000. The Role of Grey Literature in the Sciences. *Access [Brooklyn College Library]*. (10). [online]. Available: <http://chaptercouncil.mlanet.org/roundtables/2006/GreyLit.pdf> [2013, March 28].
- Willoughby, W.T. 2013. Maintenance Art, Architecture, and the Visibility of Time . *The Visibility of Research [Architectural Research Centers Consortium]*. 27 - 31 March 2013. C. Jarrett, K. Kim & N. Senske. Eds. Charlotte: University of North Carolina. 188.
- Willumson, G. 2000. The Shifting Audience of the University Museum. *Museum International*. 52(2): 15-18.
- Zeller, T. 1985. The Role of the Campus Art Museum. *Curator*. 28: 87-95.

Appendix

The Katrine Harries Print Cabinet Condition Report

5 May 2011

By Jessica Natasha Brown (in association with Johann Maree)

History

The *Katrine Harries Print Cabinet* (KHPC) is named in honour of the teacher, illustrator and artist-lithographer, Katrine Harries, in recognition of her role in establishing the teaching of printmaking as a discipline at the Michaelis School of Fine Art. The collection was initially conceived with the objectives of promoting, collecting and exhibiting prints, as well as cataloguing, conserving and documenting the university's significant print collection, housed at Michaelis. The collection, curated by Stephen Inggs and Pippa Skotnes, functions both as a didactic tool for the school, as well as a valuable collection of works by local and international printmakers. The Katrine Harries Print Cabinet is now one of the university's significant collections of works of art, and has also been responsible for the production and publication of a series of limited edition artists' books, including original prints.

The printmaking department of the Michaelis School of Fine Art is now considered to be an important centre for Fine Art print research and production in South Africa. Indeed, the department is seen as an important asset of the school and has the 'oldest history of sustained printmaking in South Africa' (Hobbs & Rankin, 1997:8). As in many institutions, the acceptance of printmaking as a recognised discipline was both difficult and delayed. Printmaking had tentatively been received at the school under Eleanor Esmonde-White, who had established the school of design at Michaelis and had been responsible for woodcutting and engraving since 1949. However, the history of the department is now primarily entwined with the personality of Katrine Harries.

In 1950, Katarine Friderike Harries (1914 - 1978), known as Katrine, was invited to teach at Michaelis in a part-time capacity, at the request of the then director of the school, Rupert Shephard, himself a printmaker and painter (Hobbs & Rankin, 1997: 8). Shephard, who had seen some of Harries's work and was aware of her art education in Berlin, and reputation as an illustrator and designer, appointed Harries as one of two part-time lecturers who were selected to replace Esmonde-White, who was going on long leave. At this time, the emphasis was largely on printmaking as a component of the typographical design and illustration programme, but Harries was instructed to establish a department of etching and lithography within the school of design and to develop the programme as circumstances allowed (Du P. Scholtz, 1978: 34).

It is interesting to note, however, that at the time of Harries's appointment, she had not in fact produced any etchings or lithographs for a full decade, nor had she ever pulled proofs of her own from either plate or stone, as, at the Berlin Academy where she had trained, all student printing was performed by a member of staff (Du P. Scholtz, 1979: 35). The equipment required for etching, as well as stone lithography, was already available at the school (it would appear that some occasional printing in these processes had been entertained before), and Harries therefore had to begin by familiarising herself with these techniques in order to slowly be able to expand the programme to incorporate dry-point, etching and lithography.

In 1951, she was introduced by May Hillhouse to John Williams (a lecturer at the Natal technical school in Durban), who was generous in sharing his own technical advice about these processes. This proved invaluable, as she became occupied, between 1951 and 1953, with the production of the *20 Prints Portfolio*, in an edition of 100, in support of the University's Development Fund Drive (Du P. Scholtz, 1979: 38). All the prints were hand-printed by Harries, with the assistance of her students, and included her own contribution to the portfolio, the lithograph *Malay girl I*.⁹¹ Later in 1953, Harries also produced a portfolio of lithographs by Lippy Lipshitz.

Despite the difficulties she faced in 'prevailing prejudice, her part-time status and small salary' (Skotnes, 1991), the medium soon gained respect through her effort

⁹¹ * Replaced by Malay Girl II when 'something' (intriguingly vague) went wrong with the stone after 34 pulls (Du P. Scholtz, 1979: 39).

and determination. Eleanor Esmonde-White had returned to Michaelis in 1951, and in 1957, May Hillhouse was appointed to the position of part-time lecturer in commercial art. They were both friends of Harries and admirers of her work, and proved to be of great support in her cause. Eventually, her perseverance and patience were rewarded, and printmaking recognised as an autonomous discipline. In late 1959, Harries was appointed to a full-time position at the Michaelis School of Fine Art, and in due course, was promoted *ad hominem* to senior lecturer in 1970 (Skotnes, 1991). She was also responsible for establishing a letterpress department to satisfy her interest in typography and the relationship between text and image.

She was known as an ‘inspiring, demanding and fastidious teacher’ (Du P. Scholtz, 1979:51), although she was considered a purist and did not encourage experimentation; more complex techniques, large and modern prints were not a specialisation of the graphic studio at Michaelis during her tenure (Du P. Scholtz, 1979:51). She continued to teach and work until the end of 1977, shortly before her death. Throughout her term at the school, Harries collected works from students, as well as retaining prints by professional artists who made use of the facilities.

The appointment of Dutch specialist printmaker, Jules van der Vijver, who taught at Michaelis from 1978 – 1983, further encouraged the development of printmaking, and served to reinforce the autonomous status of the department, as well as extending the range of available techniques. Although some students had specialized in printmaking under Harries, it was formally introduced as a

major in 1977, as the perception of the discipline shifted from it being a design to a fine art medium. Screen-printing and photo-mechanical processes were introduced and students were encouraged to see printmaking as part of the tradition of the illustrated book, and as a viable medium for artistic expression. Indeed, Harries had never seen herself as an artist, but rather primarily as an illustrator, and this perception was naturally reinforced by the role of the department. However, the emphasis now moved away from the applied arts, and printmaking asserted itself as a fine art discipline alongside those of painting and sculpture. Van der Vivjer also continued Harries's tradition of collecting works by students and artists working in the department.

In 1986, with a grant from the university's Works of Art committee, the prints collected by Katrine Harries and Jules van der Vijver were consolidated by Pippa Skotnes and Stephen Inggs and established as the Katrine Harries Print Cabinet. The practice of producing books and portfolios, begun by Harries in 1953, was also continued with the production of the *Eighteen Prints Portfolio*, later that year. Unsurprisingly, the collection was initially dominated by those processes favoured by Skotnes and Inggs in their own work and teaching; intaglio and plate lithography. Through the KHPC, the publication of the first of its hand-made limited edition books, *Mordant Methods: art and technique of intaglio printmaking* by Jo Ractliffe and Pippa Skotnes in 1989, stressed the ongoing Michaelis interest in intaglio, although further projects demonstrate the expanded interests of the school's department.

The second book in the series, *On the Surface: Art and Technique of Relief Printmaking* was published in 1995, followed by *What's Bred in the Stone: Art and Technique of Lithography*, in 1998. These artists' books were well-received and have been purchased by special collections of libraries and universities in South Africa and the United States. One of the primary motivations for the publication was the absence of any books that provided examples of original prints, without the intervention of the half-tone screen.

The Print Cabinet currently comprises several hundred original prints, etchings, lithographs, screen-prints, woodcuts and engravings, as well as ephemera such as letters, plates and even the teaching chair used by Katrine Harries. This collection includes work by both local, South African and foreign artists in a variety of forms; individual prints; portfolios and artists' books. A small number of works by notable international artists such as Rembrandt, Battista, Duma and Whistler, as well as local artists such as Battiss, Cecil Skotnes, Pierneef, Stern and Harries form part of the collection. The KHPC also boasts a substantial collection of student work, both undergraduate and post-graduate, by successful printmakers. The collection is both a teaching and research resource and is often used by students at the School.

In 1997, the Print Cabinet was incorporated into the Lucy Lloyd Archive Resource and Exhibition Centre (Llarec) and relocated to its current venue in the Old Medical School Building on Hiddingh Campus. The decision to transfer the Cabinet in this place reflects concerns about the conservation of the collection, the management and sharing of resources, the facilitation of the use of the

cabinet as a research tool, as well as a conceptual shift in the school's approach to book-arts as an act of curatorship.

Other than an annual purchase award presented by the university's Works of Art Committee, the Print Cabinet does not receive any additional funding from the university. All Print Cabinet funds are instead generated by the sale of artwork donated by staff at Michaelis and by friends of the School. The sale of these artworks generates income which is divided equally between Print Cabinet projects and annual student material bursaries. In addition, an annual Katrine Harries Print Cabinet award, to a specified amount, is used to purchase print-works of excellence from a graduating BA(FA) student each year, which is added to the collection. Works are also acquired for the Cabinet when printed at the school's facilities, in collaboration with the university's printmaking technician and master printmaker, Andrea Steer.

Method

This report is the result of a five-day workshop held between myself, Jessica Natasha Brown, as a candidate in the MAFA programme and conservator, Mr Johann Maree, between the 11th and 15th of April 2011 at the Michaelis School of Fine Art. The intensive workshop involved the analysis of the conservation requirements of the Katrine Harries Print Cabinet, with a view to its relevance to my master's research project; an investigation into the ethical considerations

of fine art conservation-restoration in relationship with the practical conservation of the Katrine Harries Print Cabinet.

Over the five-day workshop, Mr Maree and I completed a comprehensive analysis of the general condition of works in the Katrine Harries Print Cabinet. Firstly, the KHPC venue and the furniture within were scrutinised as to their suitability to safely house the collection. Thereafter, the individual prints which together constitute the collection were examined and any noticeable damage reviewed, working systematically through each drawer and folder. The cabinet contents were studied for visual damage and each symptom diagnosed, while works exhibiting deterioration of any particular interest were set aside for later discussion. During this investigation, various issues pertaining to the conservation-restoration of this collection were raised and deliberated. The conclusions drawn from the process are detailed below.

Analysis

1. Venue:

- The KHPC is currently situated in the lower right-hand wing on the ground floor of the Old Medical School Building, Hiddingh Campus. This building is close to the property perimeter, adjacent to Orange Street, which has a high volume of traffic, leading to increased exposure to air-borne pollutants and vibration from passing vehicles.

- The venue is enclosed by two exterior walls, which may exacerbate fluctuations in humidity and temperature. The windows are not properly sealed against sunlight and other weather conditions, and the floor is carpeted, which may encourage infestation by pests.
- There is currently no means of monitoring or controlling either temperature or humidity levels.
- There is currently no monitoring of light levels, nor any apparent UV protection or film on the windows. The building, including the room in which the KHPC is located, currently makes use of fluorescent-tube lighting.
- The KHPC is currently housed adjacent to a small kitchen, and the dividing wall supports a small hot-water geyser and water pipes, increasing the risk of flooding or water damage.
- At present, there does not appear to be any regular housekeeping.
- The current venue is secure; however it is too small to adequately house the collection, and is difficult for interested members of the public and / or students to access.

The lack of any environmental controls in the venue is of serious concern. As is the case with all works of art on paper, the environment surrounding prints is crucial to their preservation. All storage and display areas should be cool and dry, with minimal fluctuations of temperature and relative humidity. Because warm or moist conditions will accelerate deterioration, temperature and relative humidity (RH) should not exceed 20°C and 60%, respectively. Climatic fluctuations not only weaken paper over time but can cause rippling or distortion of the sheet. Mounting buffers a work of art against minor short-term climate changes but does not protect against seasonal changes or long periods of high humidity. Although the works did not demonstrate excessive damage caused by excessive humidity, correct monitoring and control over these conditions should nevertheless be viewed as a priority.

Light causes fading of certain media and can also darken and/or embrittle paper, the effects of which were seen on numerous print-works in the collection, particularly those that had been on display. This difference was observable between the exposed, now darkened area of the print and that area which had hidden behind a mount or frame. This damage, caused by harmful ultra-violet light, is both cumulative and irreversible. Ultra-violet light is found in all daylight, most abundantly in sunlight, as well as in the emissions of certain artificial lights, such as most fluorescent and halogen lamps. Ordinary household bulbs (incandescent or tungsten lights) contain negligible UV and are therefore recommended. However, these bulbs do produce heat, and should not be placed near any artwork.

Special filters for lighting systems are available to screen out UV radiation, including inexpensive plastic sleeves to envelope fluorescent tubes. Windows may be covered with easily-applied UV-absorbing films, or the glazing may be replaced with rigid sheets of UV-filtering plastic or glass. However, even if ultraviolet-filters are used, paper objects should be stored in areas of subdued lighting, with a recommended light level of 50 lux. Because light at any level is potentially damaging, it is advisable that no paper-based work of art be kept on permanent display.

Currently, the venue poses a number of significant problems to the effective preservation of the collection, that which conservators term 'passive'

conservation. The small dimensions of the room, though true to the derivation of the word 'cabinet' (from the French for a 'small room'), are currently of immediate concern as they inhibit efficient access to the work, as the cabinets are not able to fully open in the confines of the space. As a result, prints are more prone to damage from handling.

2. Storage Furniture:

- The cabinets, within which the prints are stored, are difficult to access and are unable to open properly. Wooden cabinets suggest potential off-gassing.
- Over-sized prints, posters and framed works are unable to be accommodated in the present cabinets and many are stored on the carpeted floor of the KHPC room.
- Most portfolio 'solander' boxes are deteriorating, and are difficult to access. The adhesive and textiles used in their construction attracts insects, such as cockroaches and fishmoth.
- Interleafing between prints was often absent, and prints were therefore found to be stacked in direct contact with one another, leading to discolouration, etc. Where interleafing tissue was present, it was for the most part inappropriate; predominantly found not to be of sufficient archival quality (acid- and lignin-free), or otherwise of an inappropriate weight and rigidity. Tracing or drafting film was occasionally found to be used as a substitute, however this is considered problematic as it is more rigid than the softer, more delicate papers used in printmaking. As a result, the decision was made to remove all unsuitable tissue.
- The folders accommodating particular works, sorted according to artist and/or medium, were found to be constructed of Fabriano cotton paper. Although seemingly sympathetic to the medium, as well as acid-free, the use of soft rag paper for the purpose of storing the prints is considered unsuitable, as it bends and dirties easily, particularly during handling. Its poor rigidity does not provide adequate support for the prints when being moved from the drawers,

and simply collapses under the weight of its contents, particularly in the case of larger works. Moreover, many of the folders were not of sufficient size, resulting in situations where prints were found to be either badly creased (particularly those on Oriental papers) or damaged as a result of prints protruding beyond the edges of the folders.

- Related archival material and printmaking materials, for the demonstration of technique (such as wood-blocks, etching plates etc.) are currently housed haphazardly in the cabinets, alongside and amidst the prints.

The selection of storage furniture for library and archival materials requires careful investigation. Many of the currently available furniture choices contain materials that produce by-products that contribute to the deterioration of the collections they house. In addition, some construction features are damaging and also contribute to deterioration of collections.

3. Prints:

The most common forms of visible damage to the KHPC's contents are listed below in order of prevalence / severity:

- Insect damage
- Tears & creases (particularly to Japanese Papers)
- Prints attached with adhesives to secondary support
- Pressure-sensitive tape and adhesive stains
- Surface dirt
- Oxidation of the paper
- Acid transfer from inappropriate framing or mounting
- Stains (of unknown origin)
- Water damage & mould

A disturbing and recurrent problem revealed during this analysis was the damage and severe discolouration caused by the residue and staining of adhesives and pressure-sensitive tapes (e.g. sellotape or masking tapes, so-called because light pressure generally causes their immediate adhesion to a surface). As many of the prints in the collection were created either in a teaching environment, or have been used as teaching aids, the majority have been used as part of temporary displays, using inappropriate methods for attachment; now highly discoloured and extremely difficult to remove. The delicacy of the papers used in printmaking (often un-sized, soft papers) means that there is a likely possibility that any treatment may introduce further damage. The extent of the damage across the collection means that the efficacy of treatments should be considered in relation to their time and cost efficiency.

With few exceptions, most of the prints in the Cabinet are aged 60 years or less. However, although this is a relatively young collection and the spectrum of conservation procedures required is narrow, even with minimal interventive conservation, the extent of the damage would require a vast expenditure of time and expense to correct. Previous display methods, handling, storage conditions, current arrangements and accrued damage have all contributed to a situation that requires a significant input of equipment, resources and expertise in order to preserve the collection effectively. In addition to the physical conservation of the objects, a collection such as this should also receive the care and stewardship of a dedicated and trained curator-conservator, in order to best benefit from the collection and to make it more accessible to both the school and broader public.

The following conversation process should be followed in ascertaining and correcting damage to the prints:

1. Visual examination
2. Identification of support and medium problems
3. Spot-tests
4. Surface cleaning
5. Backing removal
6. Hinging, tape and adhesive removal
7. Consolidation, fixing and facing
8. Washing
9. Bleaching
10. Sizing and re-sizing
11. De-Acidification, alkalisation and neutralisation
12. Drying and flattening
13. Mending, filling of losses
14. Treatment of mould, fungus and foxing
15. Lining
16. In-painting
17. Matting, hinging and framing

In the process of this analysis, Mr Maree and I identified three student works on paper from the KHPC as examples of some of the more prevalent forms of damage found in the KHPC; pressure-sensitive tape, adherence to a paper-backing support, and creasing / 'grubbiness'. We then performed several conservation treatments on these prints, so as to determine the efficacy and suitability of these processes. I must emphasise the brevity and superficiality of this exercise, which requires a more thorough and ongoing familiarity through supervision by a trained conservator.

The following procedures were performed:

Close Visual Examination was required to form an appropriately detailed understanding of prints in preparation for treatment and/or research. During visual examination, the object should be seen in as much detail as possible; and strong illumination is needed. The human eye is very adaptable and interprets colour and brightness relatively, rather than according to absolute standards. Therefore, it is important to know the effects of different illumination types on visual acuity and colour discrimination. Almost identical papers may respond differently when exposed to various different light sources. The object may also be illuminated from several angles (e.g. raking light). Binocular magnifiers and microscopes may also be required, and any information should be recorded photographically, as well as in written observations. During this phase, fibre and pigment analysis using chemical tests and polarizing light microscopy may be required and various spot-testing procedures to identify adhesives, paper additives and fibres should be conducted.

Surface cleaning is often the primary phase in the paper conservation process. Superficial grime, dirt, and soot are removed with a soft brush and non-abrasive erasing materials such as drafting powder, although vinyl erasers may also be used, both in blocks and ground into granules, taking care to clean the reverse as well as the front, while avoiding the image area. Cotton dampened with organic solvent is also sometimes used to remove ingrained surface dirt.

The traditional method for the *removal of pressure-sensitive tape* is by first removing the carrier, then removing the adhesive layer. Removal of the carrier can be accomplished either mechanically or with solvents. Mechanical techniques are preferred, where possible, because they expose the entire adhesive layer and enable uniform access to it during subsequent operations in which solvents may be involved. One effective method of separating the carrier from the adhesive mechanically is to place the paper on a hard, flat surface, grasp a micro-spatula so the blade is parallel to the plane of the tape, and gently work the edge of the blade under the carrier. One must proceed slowly, as aggressive movement will result in skinning of the paper. Sometimes the carrier will lift more easily if forward motion of the spatula is combined with a very slight wagging of the blade. Other techniques for mechanical removal have been suggested that involve the use of dry ice, of a hand-held heat gun, or of a tacking iron.

If mechanical removal of the adhesive carrier is not feasible, and immersion is not judged feasible, the carrier may be separated from the adhesive layer through the use of solvents. In a fume cupboard, a mild solvent is painted on the verso of the paper leaf in the area that bears the tape. The solvent penetrates the paper and swells the adhesive layer. With the paper turned so the tape is face-up, the carrier is lifted away from the softened adhesive with tweezers. At the same time, more solvent is painted between the carrier and adhesive layer along the peel line. Once the carrier has been removed, the residual adhesive layer remaining on the surface of the paper can also be removed.

Johann Maree suggested the use of an aromatic hydrocarbon solvent (e.g. xylene, toluene) for use on works from the KHPC and the safety concerns of these chemicals were assessed. Next, the equipment and supplies needed for treatment were assembled at the fume hood. A small amount of solvent was applied to the reverse of the print, using a cotton wool swab, and covered with polyester film. After several minutes, the object was examined to ascertain whether the adhesive had swelled and lifted from the paper surface, taking care to avoid moving the paper and so staining the print with the adhesive-solvent solution. As no visible change had occurred, the process was repeated with a 'stronger' solvent and examined at intervals, to no observable effect. It was observed that equipment such as a vacuum suction table, combined with the use stronger solvents were required in order to remove the deposits completely.

Water washing is often beneficial to paper, as it not only removes dirt and aids in stain reduction, but it can also wash out acidic compounds and other degradation products that have built up in the paper. Washing can also relax brittle or distorted paper and aid in flattening. For these reasons, works on paper even while not visibly discoloured or dirty may still benefit from washing. The three prints which were selected for washing, all lithographs, were carefully tested beforehand for water sensitivity to the media, and were found to be stable. (Objects with soluble media may be locally washed, float-washed, or washed on a suction table.) The prints were immersed in flat baths of tap water, although filtered water is sometimes preferable. On occasion, a carefully controlled amount of a chemical compound material is added to the water to raise the pH to a slightly alkaline level. This assists in the cleaning process and in the

neutralization and removal of acids. They were then removed using a textile support sheet, slightly larger than the prints and placed on sheets of waiting blotting paper before being moved to new sheets of blotting paper to dry.

The works were left to air-dry, and Johann Maree suggested that the prints should not be pressed, but rather flattened as tenderly as possible, by spraying delicately with water, before being placed between weighted sheets of blotting paper.

Recommendations

1. Venue:

- The KHPC to be moved to a larger venue outfitted with improved storage capacity and proper environmental control systems.
- A conservation department should be available, preferably adjacent to the KHPC, equipped with necessary tools, furniture and equipment.
- Display room for reading, research and improved public access to be installed.
- A thermo-hydrograph is recommended to record fluctuations in temperature and humidity of the KHPC venue over 24-hour intervals for a minimum of 1 year; this would provide a better understanding of the particular environmental concerns and strategies required.
- An air-conditioning system is required to filter and wash incoming air, maintain constant temperature 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, in conjunction with a humidifier / de-humidifier (where appropriate).
- Light levels to be ascertained and UV filters on windows and a new lighting system to be installed.

- Regular cleaning / dusting routine to be introduced.

The bindery-conservation wing of the Ritchie Building, currently leased from Michaelis by UCT libraries, is proposed as a suitable venue for this department, should it become available. It is of sufficient size; slightly removed from the perimeter of the premises; within close proximity of the printmaking department. It is installed with basic conservation equipment, though in need of updating; and is already fitted with an air-conditioning system.

2. Storage Furniture:

- Attention should be given to the choice of storage furniture, particularly the materials of the cabinets' construction.
- Additional cabinets are required to adequately house the collection. In addition, storage solutions are required for over-sized works, portfolios (presently kept in solander boxes), posters and framed prints (eg. shelving for frames and racks of mylar sleeves for posters).
- Frequently-consulted works (in use as teaching aids) should be readily accessible, perhaps shelved, rather than placed in cabinets
- Off-gassing from cabinets requires lining with acid-free board (Eg. corrugated, one-wall museum board).
- Inter-leafing with textured Archivart museum-quality tissue between works is required, as a matter of urgency. Proper mounting, matting and hinging is also needed for all works. Each print should be mounted according to pre-determined size categories, with both window & backing produced from archival museum board. Bear in mind that mounting will increase the volume of the cabinet's contents exponentially; additional storage will be required.
- It is recommended that the Fabriano organisational folders be removed. If absolutely necessary, no more than ten to fifteen prints should be placed into each folder; the more valuable or fragile the item, the fewer the sheets should

be stored in one folder. However, it is preferable that all print-works be mounted, acknowledging that this would increase the volume of the, and that the current venue housing the collection is already strained. Therefore, both a new venue and storage furniture would be required in order to adequately stabilise and preserve the collection.

- A catalogue system and acid-free envelopes are required to store related archival material and separate storage is required for printmaking materials such as wood-blocks, etching plates etc.

Until recently, only baked enamel furniture was recommended for the storage of works of art on paper. Constructed of steel, with a baked enamel coating, this furniture was thought to be made of chemically stable materials. Because it is readily available, competitively priced, strong and durable, it has been a particularly attractive choice. Questions, however, have been raised about the possibility that the baked enamel coating may give off formaldehyde and other volatiles, harmful to collections if not properly baked (not long enough, at high enough temperatures). Because of this concern about off-gassing, baked enamel furniture is no longer widely recommended, unless it has been properly treated. Steel storage furniture, with various powder coatings, appears to avoid the off-gassing problems associated with baked enamel. Powder coatings of finely divided, synthetic, polymer materials are fused onto the steel. Testing done thus far indicates that the coatings are chemically stable, present minimal threat of volatile evocation, and so are safe for the storage of valuable materials.

Storage furniture made of wood, especially shelving, has traditionally been popular for reasons of aesthetics, economy, and ease of construction, and is particularly relevant to the KHPC. However, many harmful acids and other

substances are released by cut wood, as well as the sealants and adhesives used on it. Although the levels of emissions are highest in the early stages, in most cases volatiles are present for the life of the materials.

To avoid potential damage to collections, storage furniture made of wood or wood products should be avoided. However, in regards to the KHPC, Mr Maree and I believe that the aesthetic of the wooden drawers is integral to the identity of the collection. Therefore, in choosing to retain this feature, certain precautions are necessary. Certain woods and wood composites are more potentially damaging than others. For example, oak, which has been used extensively for the storage of library and archival materials, is considered the wood with the most volatile acidity and should not be used. All wood should be sealed with an appropriate sealant, such as guaranteed moisture-borne polyurethane. In addition to sealing, the drawers should be lined with an effective barrier material. Barriers that are recommended at present include an inert metallic laminate, high-barrier films, sheet aluminium, glass, polymethyl methacrylate sheeting or a combination of these. 100% Rag-board can be used to supplement this barrier; however, it does not provide a sufficient barrier by itself.

3. Mounting:

Although there is a rich record in terms of historic mounts, the primary purpose of mounting in contemporary conservation is protection, rather than decoration. The typical museum mat is composed of a window and a backboard. The two boards should be connected with a strip of cloth tape along one edge, preferably

the left-hand side (although in some instances, such as with over-sized works, this attachment is made at the top). This convention allows the mounts to be more easily opened on a table or surface, without causing stress or damage to the window. For prints that are matted but not framed, a protective sheet should be laid over the object. Clear polyester film such as Melinex, an archival-quality polyester, is often used for the cover sheet because it is transparent as well as chemically and dimensionally stable. Polyester carries a static charge, however, and is therefore suitable only for media that are securely attached to the paper. Archival tissue paper is more appropriate for delicate media or papers.

The board recommended for preservation matting is usually white or ivory in colour, comprised either of traditional rag-board (100% cotton), or alternatively, of high-quality, wood-derived archival board that is free of lignin (a substance that can lead to the formation of acid). Both types are usually buffered with an alkaline material to ensure that they will not be adversely affected by acidic surroundings. The mat window and its backboard should be of the same size and weight. Four-ply board usually suffices, but thicker mats may be required for large sheets (such as those that may cockle or ripple, or for works with thick media, seals, or other raised elements).

The print should always be mounted onto the backboard of the mat, never on the reverse of the window. The accepted method involves the use of paper hinges and an appropriate adhesive, although corner supports or edge strips have become increasingly popular, as they do not require adhesive to be applied directly to the object. Hinges, corner supports, and edge strips should all be

constructed with the intention that the print may be easily removed from the mat if required.

Hinges comprise small rectangles of strong, archival-quality paper. Part of the hinge adheres to the reverse of the object and part to the backboard. The thickness of the hinge paper is crucial, as it should always be lighter in weight than the print to which it is attached. The paper recommended for hinging is pure Japanese kozo (sometimes referred to as mulberry paper or, erroneously, rice paper). Papers made from 100 percent kozo fibres are lightweight, lignin-free, and long-fibered, and should therefore be torn (never cut). They age well, remaining strong and flexible for many years. Two hinges are usually applied to the top of the print, slightly away from the corners. However, with larger or heavy sheets, additional hinges may be added at intervals along the edge. If the area of the print extends to the edge of the paper, it may be preferable to 'float' the print by threading the hinges from the back of the print to the back of the back-board, using additional hinges at the bottom corners or along the other three edges. Holes may be cut into the back-board before attaching the print to identify any marks of interest on the reverse.

Hinges should be attached with an adhesive that is non-staining, permanent, and reversible, such as homemade starch-based paste. Such a paste has the qualities of sufficient strength, good aging properties, no tendency to discolour, and reversibility. Alternatively, methyl cellulose may be used. Animal glues (mucilage) or rubber cement are not recommended as they darken on aging and can stain paper. Synthetic adhesives, such as the ubiquitous white household

glue, may not stain but are not recommended because they become irreversible as they age.

Non-adhesive methods of mounting may be used instead of hinges, such as corner supports. These may be either paper or plastic envelopes folded over the corners of the print and adhered to the backboard. Another method involves the use of edge strips, lengths of paper folded over the edges of the print. These may be made of paper or polyester film. To hold the print in place, these supports must necessarily overlap the front edges of the object but can be concealed if they are covered by the mat.

4. Management:

- Expertise: The KHPC requires the stewardship of a trained curator and conservator/s in order to preserve the collection, maintain a regular monitoring and house-keeping regime, facilitate during handling and research of the collection and arrange opportunities / make selections for its public exhibition.
- Literature: Access to relevant resources, literature and publications. Eg. The creation of a *Centre for Curating the Archive* (CCA) library.
- Archive: The collection requires the creation and upkeep of records and written documentation through an acquisitions register. Photography, condition reports and conservation worksheets need to be compiled and catalogued for each item in the collection. Conservation worksheets should detail the object's condition as well as document all conservation treatments employed.
- Policy: The KHPC requires the development and implementation of acquisitions, collections management (including preservation) and handling policies.

- Integrated Pest Management System
 - Venue requires Goliath gel and / or fumigation against cockroaches and other pests.
 - Reconsider carpeting, which provides cover and nesting ground for insects.
 - Weather-strip door to prevent access by insects and pests
- Disaster Plan & Supplies ('Disaster Box')
 - Formulate plan: prevention / preparedness / response in the event of theft, fire, flooding or other natural disasters
 - Equip 'Disaster Box' with appropriate supplies, maintained annually
 - Train disaster team

Organisation of the collection is a priority; the development of an acquisitions plan should outline the curatorial vision for this collection and purchases, donations and print cabinet awards. (e.g. teaching aids in different techniques, examples of printmaking that chart the development of printmaking in South Africa, exceptional printmaking for display and investment, etc.) The organisation and storage of the cabinet should therefore follow this model, according to different priorities.

A decision should be made by the department as to the priorities of the ongoing conservation of the Katrine Harries Print Cabinet and the allocation of resources in the purchase of equipment and training of professionals. It may be to the school's advantage to motivate for the implementation of a conservation curriculum to make use of the required equipment and resources. Mr Johann Maree estimates that such a programme would require a minimum intake of 8 interested students a year in order to be viable.

* * *