

## **Collections Development Policy**

### **1. Background**

Established by the Theatres Trust Act 1976 and the Theatres Trust (Scotland) Act 1978 'to promote the better protection of theatres' the Trust is a statutory consultee on planning. Local authorities in England, Scotland and Wales are required to consult the Trust on planning applications for all theatres.

We promote great theatre buildings by advising, funding and campaigning on behalf of theatres across the UK. With expertise in architecture, heritage, planning and theatre management, each year we support more than 350 theatres, local authorities and community groups to create, adapt and save their local theatre as a valuable resource at the heart of the community.

### **2. Collection strengths**

These include:

- Theatre architecture
- Theatre design
- Town development
- History of leisure and entertainment

### **3. Acquisition**

The Theatres Trust Archive usually acquires material from the following sources:

- Theatres Trust records
- External depositors with material that meet the selection criteria

All analogue and digital material is assessed in relation to the Theatres Trust Selection Criteria which states that the Trust will only accept material that relates directly to work in relation to theatre architecture. The Trust does not have a collecting repository and will not accept general material on the history of theatres. In these circumstances, staff will attempt to identify other repositories that may be best placed to accept this material.

In special cases, the accession of material relating to the history of theatre architecture, which complements the existing collections, may be considered. This is at the discretion of the Theatres Trust staff, and is subject to the limitations of space, time and resources.

When deciding whether to accept a paper-based collection, space and resources are taken into consideration. External funding sources can also be considered at this time. The Trust reserves the right to decline material that cannot be accessed or preserved at reasonable cost.

#### 4. Selection Criteria

When considering donations and acquisitions, Theatres Trust will prioritise items that contribute to the current collection strengths as outlined in section 2. The Trust will endeavour to accept items with specific relation to theatres and theatre buildings and offer our apologies that we are unable to accept items with primary relation to specific performances and/ or performers.

In line with its organisational mission, The Trust will prioritise items relating to:

- Theatre architecture
- Theatre design

Other items we may take at our discretion may relate to:

- Town development
- History of leisure and entertainment

Examples of items that <b>may be accepted</b> include, but may not be limited to:	Examples of items that <b>will not be accepted</b> include, but are not limited to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theatre Plans and drawings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance Posters and Programmes and Publicity materials for shows</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photos and postcards of theatre buildings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Books / documents that focus on history of performance or specific performers</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Books / documents that contain specific details or history of theatre buildings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical items / props/ non printed items</li> </ul>

#### 5. Gifts of archival material

There are general conditions laid down for all donations of material:

- All material must come from a bona fide source and should be able to demonstrate provenance
- The donor must have the authority to gift the material
- All material must meet the terms in the gift agreement
- The donor must sign the gift agreement
- There should be not unnecessary restrictions on access or availability for research
- If there are parts of the collection that do not match the Archival Selection Criteria, these will be offered back to the depositor, offered to another institution, or disposed of. This is also the case with duplicate material.
- There should be no stipulations on storage, conservation, preservation or cataloguing or use which do not conform to the Theatres Trust’s available resources or strategic aims.

The Trust does not accept accessions on deposit or loan, it only accepts gifts. This is because the Trust does not have the resources to appraise, catalogue, store and manage material that may be returned to the owner in the future.

The Theatres Trust does not have a budget to purchase archive material.

## **6. Active collecting and subject development**

The Trust does not, at present, actively solicit deposits of archive material, although it does respond positively to offers of material in the collecting areas as outlined above in section 2.

It is clearly not possible, due to the unique nature of archives and the generally non-routine nature of their survival, to undertake a systematic collecting process in the same way that a library might. However, there are general areas where we might seek to build upon existing strengths or develop certain subject areas.

## **7. Implementation and Review**

This Collections Development Policy will be communicated to Theatres Trust staff and stakeholders. It will be made available to the public via the Archives web pages.

The Collections Development Policy will be reviewed every two years by the appropriate staff member. This does not preclude earlier review should internal or external development warrant it.