

Policy for Collecting Archeological Materials and Antiquities at the Harn Museum of Art

The Harn Museum of Art accepts and abides by the *Guidelines on the Acquisition of Archaeological Material and Ancient Art*, adopted by the Association of Art Museum membership, January 29, 2013. In keeping with that document, the Harn will be guided by the following policy in its collection of all archeological materials and antiquities.

When considering the acquisition of any archeological materials or antiquities, the Harn Museum recognizes its responsibility in balancing the need to preserve works and respect cultural patrimony. The Museum will always prefer objects that have well documented provenances (for example, which have been published in earlier books or catalogues, have recorded sales histories, or have been recorded in legal documents.) The provenance should indicate that the object under consideration was collected outside the probable country of origin prior to 1970, the date of the UNESCO Convention (see AAMD document). The museum recognizes that objects with such provenances are typically more difficult to find and more expensive to buy than objects without such provenances. However, the museum believes that collecting ethically is more important than collecting economically.

The museum may occasionally consider the acquisition of archeological objects or antiquities that do not have documented provenance pre-dating 1970. In these cases, the museum must provide substantial evidence that the work was outside its country of probable modern discovery before 1970 or legally exported from that county after 1970. Further, the curator shall demonstrate to the director verbally and in the written acquisition justification that the objects in question are not exceptionally rare or unique to a particular archeological context, and that comparable pieces have been widely collected by other museums and private individuals for many years.

When purchasing archeological objects or antiquities, the museum will prefer to purchase objects from well advertised public auctions that are open to academic, legal, and governmental scrutiny. If the museum purchases or accepts the donation of an unprovenanced object from a private individual or gallery, the museum will require the individual or gallery to provide a letter explaining what is known about the origins of the piece, verifying that they have legal title to sell or donate the piece, and providing documentation of legal exportation of the work, including the immediate past export to the U.S., so as to demonstrate that the piece was not illegally removed from its country of origin.

If the museum acquires an object that lacks a clear pre-1970 provenance, the museum will prominently post on the AAMD website images and information on the object with all facts relevant to the decision to acquire it, including what is known of its provenance. For all acquisitions of archaeological objects and antiquities the museum will promptly publish the objects in print and/or electronic form (on the museum's Website) and will include an image of the work of art and its provenance to allow public access to the works and to ensure that all information about the works is readily available.

In the event that claims are made against any archeological objects or antiquities collected by the Harn Museum, the museum will cooperate fully with the claimants to establish the proper ownership of the objects in question. If an object in the Harn Museum collection can be proven to have been removed from its country of origin illegally, the museum will turn over the object to an appropriate institution in that country.

Note: The Committee on Collections of the Harn Museum of Art endorsed the original AAMD policy at their meeting on December 16, 2008. The Harn policy was revised and updated to reflect AAMD Guidelines on June 29, 2015. These guidelines can be reviewed at:
<https://www.aamd.org/sites/default/files/document/AAMD%20Guidelines%202013.pdf>