

Archiving the Arts workshop

Welcome to the workshop and thanks for taking part. We've included some of the items used in our discussions and links to relevant resources. Please let us know if they are helpful and do tell us what other information would be useful for you.

Hints and tips for arts organisations and practitioners - Looking after your stuff

Handling

Make sure your hands are clean and dry when handling documents and archives. Handle archives carefully and keep them away from food and drink.

Storage

Store your artworks and documents in a clean, fairly cool, dark place. (Sunlight is really damaging to both artworks and documents so if your storage room has windows think about using boxes to keep things safe.)

Avoid storing in attics or cellars where you cannot easily check they are ok.

Store things according to shape and size. Keep flat documents flat (don't roll them). If papers are already rolled don't unroll them without talking to a conservator first.

Keep paper records and artworks in a lidded box to protect them from light, dust and dirt (make sure your box is big enough and doesn't crush or crumple what's inside).

Protect your archives from heat and damp. Archives, records and artworks are best kept in a cool, damp-free place where air can circulate. So keep them away from kitchens, bathrooms and damp spaces in your building. Damp can damage archives and sometimes cause mould to grow.

Protect material from dust, which can build up and damage materials over time (boxes are a great help here).

Don't store your archives in ordinary plastic such as bags, wrapping or folders. Plastics prevent air circulation and, over time, can release harmful chemicals.

Display

Don't display your artwork in direct sunlight. Sunlight can fade artworks and documents and make the materials they are made from dry and brittle. Dry and brittle items get damaged very easily.

Always frame your artwork if possible - this gives it more protection. Try to use a good quality frame, with 'acid-free' mounting card. Acids in some paper and card can cause damage when in contact with artworks.

3-D artworks and sculpture can be displayed on a shelf or in a cupboard with glass doors. Again, this should be out of direct sunlight and away from dust and damp.

What else to keep

Any sketches and notes that record your creative process and any documents or emails (see Digital Records) which show your business processes and decisions are worth keeping for the future. They will help people to understand how your life as an artist works both creatively and also practically.

Digital records

Digital records and artworks both need to be looked after carefully to preserve them for the future.

Digital records in an organisation

What's in the box? Introduction to organisation and storage

You already *know* how to organise things by identifying what they are; and how to store them to find them and keep them safe:

your cutlery drawer or crockery cupboard; your fridge or pantry or vegetable rack; your wardrobe or your chest-of-drawers

BUT *other people* need to know how you've organised things so *they* can find and use them too, so:

be explicit about your organisational arrangement

make it easily-understandable

What are we managing? Born digital and digitised material

Born digital means things that have only ever existed in a digital format

Digitised material means things created from paper or any other analogue format:

the issues are generally the same but when you digitise material

you have more control and more choices to make about the right format for accessing, reusing and preserving things for the future

BUT you need to take an *active* approach to managing digital material to be sure of its longevity

What's it all about? Digital preservation in a nutshell

Things you need to think about include:

Identifying the digital format and file type

Naming digital material clearly

Storing in the right kind of *box*

Copying to keep an exact digital original

Accessing with the right software and hardware

Tracking how digital material is used and reused

Preserving by regularly opening and reviewing digital files

REMEMBER you need to have a preservation plan and to take an *active* approach to preserving digital material

Digital records for arts practitioners

Digital images are best saved as high resolution TIFFs. High resolution means image quality of at least 300 pixels per inch – this is a better quality to print from in the future. TIFF stands for Tagged Image File Format and is a good format to use for images that you want to keep for a long time. It is a lossless format, which means that it keeps all of the image information, rather than a lossy format (e.g. jpegs), which keeps only some of the information. In future, you might want to migrate from TIFF if a more popular lossless format comes along for keeping high quality digital images.

Keep multiple copies of digital records. For example, you could keep one copy on your pc or laptop; email one to yourself and one to another person; keep at least two copies on removable media like CD, DVD, memory stick or portable hard drive. You could keep one at your business premises or studio and one at another location. All of this helps your digital records to survive for the future - if something happens to one copy; you have backup copies so you won't lose the information you need.

Check removable media (e.g. memory sticks or cds) to see if it still works at least every year. If it does not, make another copy from one of your back-ups.

Copy your records and images to new removable media at least every 5 years. This is important even if you haven't found a problem with it because it helps to preserve the images saved on the media.

To **share** images of your work online, you can make a JPEG or even better, a PNG copy. These are both file formats that are often used online. JPEG stands for Joint Photographic Information Group. It is probably more suitable for continuous tone images such as scenery, though it is a lossy format. PNG stands for Portable Network Graphics, which is a format which can give you better compression for images and is lossless, which means that it keeps all the image information.

Consider the **formats** used for digital moving image; your master copy should be of the highest quality possible. Lower quality formats are suitable for sharing on the web, but are not good for preservation or future re-use.

Remember that putting images and documents such as PDFs online is a good way of sharing them, though it does not always mean that they will be preserved for the future. Keeping more than one copy of a high quality digital record is very important to make sure that they survive in the long term.

Resources for looking after arts records and archives

Association of Performing Arts Collections (APAC), *Starting Out Guide for Theatres and Theatre Companies*, <http://performingartscollections.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/APAC-Resource-for-Theatres-and-Companies.pdf>

Sustained Theatre, *Archive toolkit*, <http://www.sustainedtheatre.org.uk/introduction-archive> and <http://sustainedtheatresearchives.wordpress.com>

Archive Principles and Practice: an introduction to archives for non- archivists, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/archive-principles-and-practice-an-introduction-to-archives-for-non-archivists.pdf>

The National Archives, *Digital Collections*, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/digital-collections.htm>

The Archives and Record Association, *Film and Sound Archives in non-specialist repositories*, www.archives.org.uk/images/Film_BPG.pdf

Collections Link , *Basic Principles of Film and Video Preservation and Conservation*,

www.collectionslink.org.uk/index.cfm?ct=assets.assetDisplay/title/Basic%20Principles%20of%20Film%20and%20Video%20Conservation%20and%20Preservation/assetId/384

PrestoSpace: working to improve and standardise practice for audio-visual material, *Preservation Guide*, <http://wiki.prestospace.org/pmwiki.php?n=Main.NavigationGuide>

Preservation Advisory Centre, *Guide to Photographic Materials* (includes moving image film); www.bl.uk/blpac/pdf/photographic.pdf

Screen Heritage UK, *Moving Image Handbook*, <http://www.collectionslink.org.uk/subjects/film-a-photography/1200-screen-heritage-uk-moving-image-collections-handbook>

Further information

Archiving the Arts: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/archiving-the-arts.htm>

Explore your Archive: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/explore-your-archive-toolkit.htm>

Information resources – how to find archives and collections

ARCHON directory of repositories: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archon>

National Register of Archives – collections held in many places across the Capital and the UK: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/nra>

Funding

Producing a fundraising strategy helps to raise your game in securing external funding and helps to get buy in from your parent organisations, colleagues, audiences and supporters.

Your strategy may cover:

- the need for funding
- evidence to support this
- a description of how you are to tackle this need
- a description of how these actions will benefit your organisation

Then when you need to prepare bids you'll have already prepared the information that you need to make a strong case.

- Fundraising strategy: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/fundraising-strategy.htm>
 - Government and statutory funding: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/government-statutory-funding.htm>
 - Trusts and foundations: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/trusts-foundations.htm>
 - National Cataloguing Grants programme: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/cataloguing-grants-programme.htm>
 - Heritage Lottery Fund programmes: <http://www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/programmes/Pages/programmes.aspx>
 - Arts Council Funding programmes: <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/our-investment/funding-programmes/>
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Seeking expert help

How to find a conservator: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/information-management/projects-and-work/consulting-a-conservator.htm>

How to find an archivist: <http://www.archives.org.uk/general/list-of-freelance-consultants.html>

Detailed resources for records and archives

Collections Link (MLA), *Benchmarks for Collections Care 2.0*, <http://www.collectionslink.org.uk/programmes/benchmarks-for-collections-care>

Collections Trust, *Revisiting Archive Collections Toolkit*, <http://www.collectionslink.org.uk/programmes/revisiting-collections/995-revisiting-archive-collections-toolkit>

Collections Trust and Renaissance East Midlands, *Reviewing Significance Framework*, http://emms.org.uk/museum_development/further_information/

Museum of London e-learning tools on Collection Care, <http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/corporate/about-us/regional-programmes/publications-and-resources/>

PrestoSpace, *Preservation guide*, <http://wiki.prestospace.org/pmwiki.php?n=Main.NavigationGuide>

Screen Heritage UK, *handbook*, <http://www.collectionslink.org.uk/subjects/film-a-photography/1200-screen-heritage-uk-moving-image-collections-handbook>

The National Archives, *Art and Artists* research guide, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/research-guides/art-and-artists.htm>

The National Archives, *Film, Television and the Performing Arts* research guide, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/research-guides/film-tv-performing-arts.htm>

The National Archives, *Collection Development Tools and Guidance*, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/collection-development-tools-and-guidance.pdf>

West Yorkshire Archive Service, *Community Archive Accreditation Scheme*, http://nowthen.org/assets/files/accreditation/CAA_Scheme.pdf

Projects and partnerships

We'd like to find out about existing projects and partnerships for arts-related collections, and those in the planning or ideas stage.

Please share information on existing and planned projects and partnerships:

What is the project?

Which collections does it include?

Who are the partners?

Would you like to share a case study?

Please keep in touch with your questions and ideas for Archiving the Arts. We look forward to keeping the conversation going.

- Tell us about your collections of the arts
- Tell us about who are you working with in the arts and archive sectors
- Send a link to your website
- Follow @FleurArchives on Twitter and use #archivingarts to join the conversation
- We can offer advice on collection development, surveys of collections, partnerships, funding and working with arts organisations and people.

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