

Maribyrnong  
CITY COUNCIL

# Art and Heritage Collection Policy

(endorsed May 2021)

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Cover:  
Terry Matassoni, *Bridge over the River*, oil on linen (1991)  
Maribyrnong City Council's Art and Heritage Collection

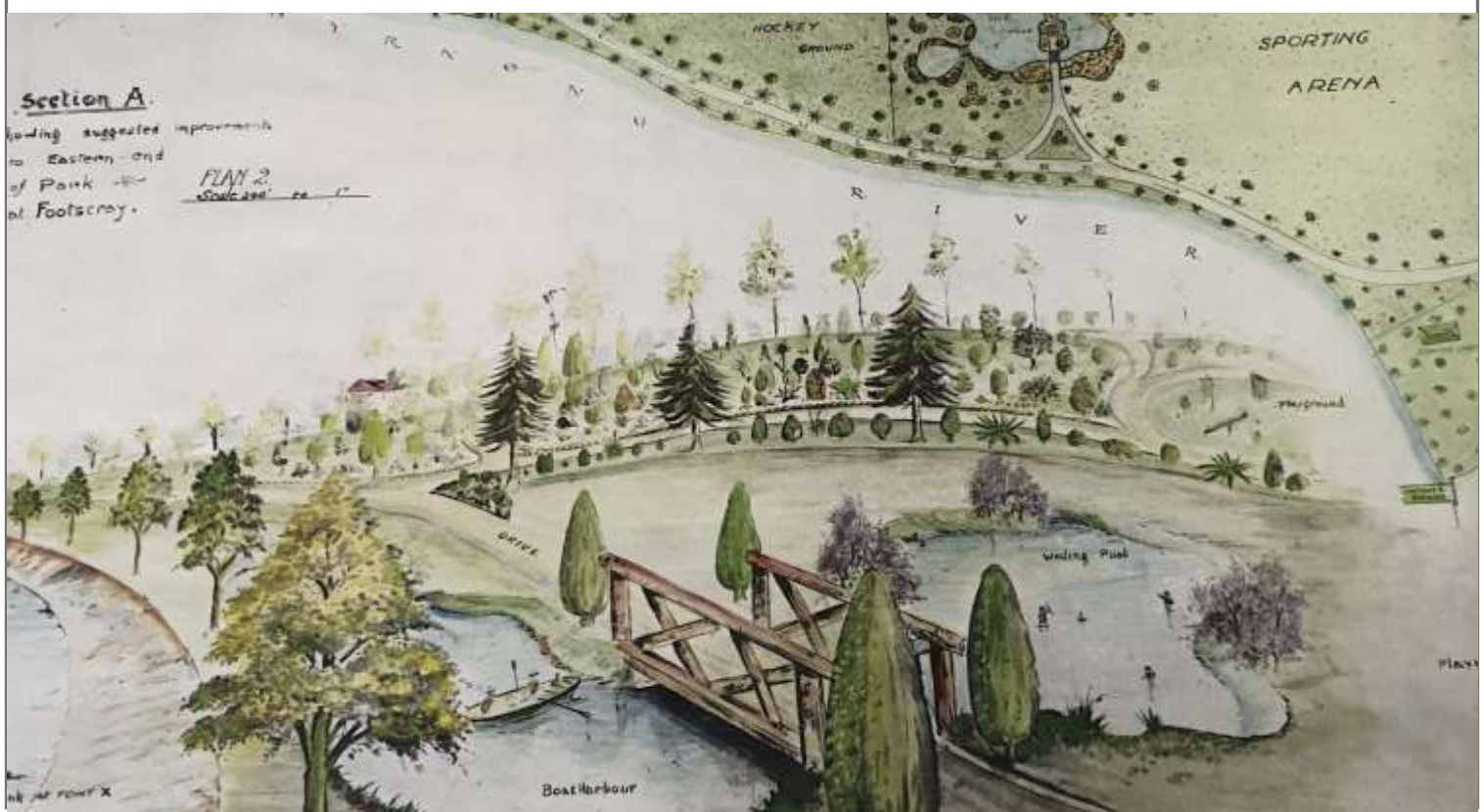
# Statement of purpose

The Maribyrnong City Council owns and manages a permanent Art and Heritage Collection (the Collection) and acts as custodian on behalf of the Maribyrnong community. The Collection dates from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and incorporates items from the City of Maribyrnong's predecessors - the City of Footscray and part of the City of Sunshine. The Collection comprises approximately 750 works including paintings, photographs, works on paper, ceramics, glass, textiles, sculpture, furniture, monuments, memorials, murals, honour boards, books, historical documents and ephemera. Council wishes to acknowledge the importance of its community's unique social and cultural heritage as embodied in its Art and Heritage Collection.

This Art and Heritage Collection Policy:

- Articulates the vision, purpose, significance and objectives of the Collection;
- Provides guidance for Council's work in maintaining and developing an Art and Heritage Collection of high significance, relevance and quality to which Maribyrnong City communities and others have access;
- Provides a framework to guide the acquisition, management, access to, conservation and preventive conservation, interpretation and deaccessioning of items in the Collection;
- Provides parameters to document and interpret the artistic, cultural, civic, social, and historical identities of Maribyrnong;
- Positions Council to take an informed and sustainable management approach to its existing and future Art and Heritage Collection; and
- Increases the understanding of, and engagement with, heritage, history, contemporary art and the cultural life of the municipality.

*Below: David Reeves Matthews MBE (1890-1970) Footscray Park and Reserve, drawings c. 1950 (detail) Maribyrnong City Council's Art and Heritage Collection.*





# Vision

The innovative and the lived artistic, cultural, environmental, political and social political life of Maribyrnong – its diversity, its vibrancy and its roots – is evident in and interpretable through Maribyrnong City Council's Art and Heritage Collection.

The development of Maribyrnong's Art and Heritage Collection is essential to ensure it remains vibrant and relevant. The following principles guide this development:

The First Nations of the Kulin Nation have lived along the Maribyrnong River for at least 40,000 years where they camped, hunted, held ceremonies, quarried for stone, traded in precious commodities and held deep knowledge of the natural vegetation, animals, places and practices. Maribyrnong's Indigenous people witnessed the landscape change radically over the ages, most radically with the arrival of Europeans. The Kulin stories of the Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri peoples are meaningful and the historic and contemporary connection to Country and unique perspectives of our First Nation's people hold wisdom and value for our Collection.

We value works that start conversations about identity and place, our past and the present. There are many layers to the history of Maribyrnong which had village reserves in Footscray and Braybrook from as early as the 1840s. Our city is rich with story as each new flow of migration from World War I onwards shaped this municipality. We are interested in capturing this dynamism and rapid changes to Maribyrnong, its industrial roots, economic transitions, social diversity and cultural strengths of the region.

The Collection aims to preserve heritage, but also provides avenues to celebrate and interpret heritage so that knowledge, stories and insights about the inner-west of Melbourne are shared with the community now and into the future. The stories of Maribyrnong's working people represent a unique resource and contribution to the State of Victoria and beyond. The West has often been a place of beginnings: for the Aboriginal Advancement League; working women, during and post-World War II; Medicare; the unions; manufacturing, immigration and artist-run collectives, to name a few. The Collection will allow multiple perspectives to be shared so the past can be interpreted in different ways, reflecting the diversity of our community and to ensure that 'hidden' stories won't be lost. We also look to high-calibre artists with a deep understanding of the municipality to provide contemporary perspectives on identity, society and the evolving fabric of Maribyrnong that invite thought, delight or enlightenment.

We seek the digitisation of the Collection for wide accessibility but also advocate for a purpose-built Civic Gallery to house Maribyrnong City Council's Collection, along with other exhibitions so that these cultural assets can be experienced live and in real time freely by the community.

# Objectives

Maribyrnong City Council achieves this vision for its Collection by:

1. Valuing arts and culture in the municipality;
2. Adopting clear, accountable and best practice collection management processes;
3. The provision of industry-approved storage facilities for housing works in a range of media to ensure the stability of the Collection and preserve its asset value;
4. Ensuring significance assessments are undertaken and a 'Statement of Significance' is written for all items ([https://www.arts.gov.au/sites/default/files/significance-2.0.pdf?acsf\\_files\\_redirect](https://www.arts.gov.au/sites/default/files/significance-2.0.pdf?acsf_files_redirect)) to reinforce the Collection's value and integrity;
5. Commissioning conservation assessments and treatments as needed;
6. Developing guidelines for exhibiting, displaying and interpreting the Collection in public spaces;
7. Promoting cooperation between Council departments to cohesively document, preserve, celebrate and interpret the heritage of the City;
8. Providing opportunities for the public to access and engage with the Collection and to understand the social, historical, artistic, cultural and environmental development of Maribyrnong;
9. Acquiring works of art and heritage of excellence with significance to the City of Maribyrnong and in line with the policy's vision and key themes;
10. Fostering and supporting the creative economy by investing in local artists and/or artists with prior strong connections to the municipality and acquiring their significant works;
11. Fostering a supportive working relationship with the arts, history and heritage network operating within Maribyrnong City; and
12. Attracting donations, bequests and other external support because of its professional management, standing and accessibility.

# The Art and Heritage Collection

The Art and Heritage Collection is made up of four categories reflecting the historical development of the Collection to date, and, in some respects, each requiring a different type of management and care.

## 1. Civic History Collection

Objects, artworks and ephemera of significance that document and interpret the civic history of the City of Maribyrnong and Council, and the former municipalities of Footscray and Sunshine (now Brimbank City Council). These include:

- Items used to conduct Council business such as decorative and ceremonial objects including Council chamber furniture and fittings, municipal seals, mayoral robes and chains.
- Municipal and commemorative material where the content and provenance are clearly related to Council's business or have been commissioned by Council: eg. works of art, craft and design in various media: paintings, sculpture, photographs, prints, memorabilia, honour boards, plaques, awards, trophies and certificates.



Print reproduction by D. W. Paterson Co. Pty Ltd. (c. 1917 -1922) of original artwork designed by Cecil G. Smith for a certificate to be awarded to individuals from Footscray who enlisted in the Great War, 1914-1918. It forms part of Maribyrnong City Council's Heritage Collection.

## 2. History and Heritage Collection

Objects, documents, memorabilia, cultural material, community art, oral histories and ephemera as represented in the Maribyrnong Library Service's Local History collection(s), and other representations of Maribyrnong's history and heritage that have had their genesis in organisations, institutions and individuals of significance to the municipality.

## 3. Visual Art Collection

Significant two and three-dimensional works of art across all media by emerging, mid-career and established artists with a connection to Maribyrnong.

They may include paintings, photographs, sculptures, textiles, prints, drawings, digital media, ceramics and other crafts, installations, ephemeral and temporary artworks.

*Below: Kip Scott, **Binks Ford**, lustre chomira photographic print (2006). It forms part of Maribyrnong City Council's Visual Art Collection.*





#### 4. Public Art Collection

Public art is either permanent or temporary creative practice in a range of media designed and executed for the public realm. Works may include two and/or three-dimensional site-specific objects and sculpture, murals, digital interventions, lighting, temporary art installations/performance or integrated design features into the built environment.

Maribyrnong City Council's *Public Art Strategy 2019-2029* provides a framework for the development of Council's Public Art Collection through commission, acquisition and/or donation and includes guidelines for best practice collection management, maintenance and promotion of public artworks.

*Below: Matthew Harding (1971-2018) Pipedreams, Steel pipes (2016) Location: entry of Pipemakers Park, Maribyrnong and it forms part of Maribyrnong City Council's Public Art Collection.*





# What we collect

The key themes reflected in the Collection are:

- Our Environment (Maribyrnong's nature and country: the natural and urban landscape, climate, topography, rivers, landmarks and built heritage)
- Our People (artistic, cultural, economic, historic, social and political)
- Our Growth (industry, workforce, working conditions, travel, communications)
- Our Identity (creation stories, waves of migration, demographics, communities, social histories)
- Our Artistic Legacy and Culture (First Nations' cultural heritage; historical, modern contemporary art movements; diversity and excellence in cultural expression; creativity and integrity, in artistic practices)

## How we collect

### Acquisition

Works are accessioned into the Art and Heritage Collection through acquisition, donation, bequest or commission.

### Acquisition criteria

In all four categories, acquisitions must be a significant work of high quality in line with the Collection's Vision and Key Themes with a clear and verifiable link to Maribyrnong. This means one or more of the following:

- the creator must have lived, worked or have a deep connection to Maribyrnong during the development and completion of the item
- the item may be largely constructed by materials that originated in Maribyrnong
- the item has relevance to a person, location or characteristic of Maribyrnong
- the item must contribute to an understanding of a period, place, activity, industry or event that is of significance to Maribyrnong

It must also meet one or more of the following criteria:

- enhances the Collection in terms of current thematic discourse or develops identifiable themes already in the Collection
- enhances the Collection in terms of artistic form or medium to build on key artists in the Collection
- represents current debate and supports the work of emerging, mid-career and established artists
- enhances the scope of the current Collection having been assessed as of local, regional or national significance under one or more of the criteria set out in *Significance 2.0*<sup>1</sup>;
- be an unconditional donation, purchase or bequest with clear and verifiable provenance
- be free of any financial or legal encumbrance and/or legal title can be transferred to Council
- an artwork or item which does not duplicate any other item in the Collection
- be able to be placed on display without hindering public access or safety or breaching the artist's moral rights

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.arts.gov.au/sites/default/files/significance-2.0.pdf?acsf\\_files\\_redirect](https://www.arts.gov.au/sites/default/files/significance-2.0.pdf?acsf_files_redirect)

- public art works and commissions must be relevant and appropriate to the context of the proposed site and consistent with planning schemes
- has sufficient resources allocated by Council to ensure museum-standard storage, maintenance and conservation

### Acquisition approval procedures

The Arts and Culture Coordinator and Visual and Public Art Curator work in consultation with the Visual Art and Heritage Working Group (VAHWG) to process all proposed art, heritage and public art acquisitions. The Working Group will consist of a small number (4-8) of experts across the four categories of Visual Art, Public Art, Civic History and History and Heritage. As the Collection also contains Public Art, both internal and external specialists (such as engineers, conservators, etc.) will be invited to provide expert advice from time to time as recommended in the *Public Art Strategy 2019-2029*.

The Visual Art and Heritage Working Group are advisory only and can make recommendations on:

- acceptance of donations and bequests into the Collection
- acquisitions of works of art and heritage items
- commissioning/acquisition of works of art and heritage items for inclusion (accessioning into) in the Collection
- de-accessioning of works of art and heritage items from the Collection
- strategic direction of the Collection

All acquisitions will be formally processed and registered into the Collection to ensure their status as the property of Maribyrnong City Council is legally substantiated. Individual works valued at or less than \$7,500 must be agreed upon and formally approved by the Arts and Culture Coordinator and Visual and Public Art Curator.

Individual works valued at or less than \$15,000 must be agreed upon and formally approved by the Manager, Arts Libraries and Community, Arts and Culture Coordinator, and Visual and Public Art Curator. These works need not require consultation with the Visual Art and Heritage Working Group if the item meets the Criteria as set out in this Collection Policy.

Individual works valued at greater than \$15,000 must be proposed to the Visual Art and Heritage Working Group for recommendation and advice before it is added to the Collection.

Proposals valued in excess of \$150,000 (inclusive of GST) will be subject to a formal public tender process and must be formally approved by the Director, Community Services. All purchases must be in accordance with Maribyrnong City Council's current instruments of Sub-Delegation – Operating Authority, or equivalent.

### Collection valuation

The value of all items in the Arts and Heritage Collection is subject to a re-evaluation cycle every five years, as per Maribyrnong City Council's Asset Management Policy.

## Deaccessioning

Deaccessioning is the process by which the Council may legally and formally remove items from its Collection.

### Deaccessioning criteria

An item may be considered for deaccession and disposal based on one or more of the following criteria:

- does not meet the Art and Heritage Collection Policy's Vision and Key Themes
- is in poor condition and considered to be of insufficient merit for allocation of conservation resources
- its conservation and storage costs are outside Council's capacity
- the item lacks any supporting documentation or provenance to enable proper identification or to confirm it's relevant to the Collection
- cannot be displayed due to its properties and is not suitable for research
- a duplicate, copy or reproduction that serves no specific function
- irreparably damaged or destroyed, missing or stolen without hope of return
- Council receives a substantiated request for the return of the work to the owner/donor
- the work does not possess artistic or heritage significance or merit as determined by an industry expert
- in the case of Public Art, if the site is no longer owned by Council, or is to be redeveloped for other purposes, and the artwork is unable to be relocated, the artist must be consulted first as to its future

### Deaccessioning procedures

A Deaccession Recommendation Form must be prepared by the Visual and Public Art Curator and Art and Heritage Collections Officer and a recommendation made by the Visual and Public Art Working Group. This must be accompanied by a Statement of Significance for the item.

Recommendations for deaccessioning will be considered by the Arts and Culture Coordinator and/or Manager, Director, CEO or Council in line with financial delegations.

All deaccessioned artworks and heritage items will be retained for a period of twelve months to allow for reconsideration and reassessment. At the conclusion of the twelve-month period, the proposal to deaccession will be reviewed by Council's Arts and Culture Unit prior to disposal.

Deaccessioning is not a revenue raising exercise, and funds from sale of items will be used for collection maintenance in accordance with the *ICOM Code of Ethics*.<sup>2</sup>

Councillors, Council staff, volunteers, committee members and their families are prohibited from obtaining a work deaccessioned from the Collection.

### Disposal procedures

An item approved for deaccessioning must be disposed of by the following methods in priority order:

- in the event of loss, theft, irreparable damage or deterioration, the artist/s will be informed
- where a work has been commissioned, the artist/s (or estate) will be offered a first right of refusal to purchase the item

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<sup>2</sup> <https://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ICOM-code-En-web.pdf>

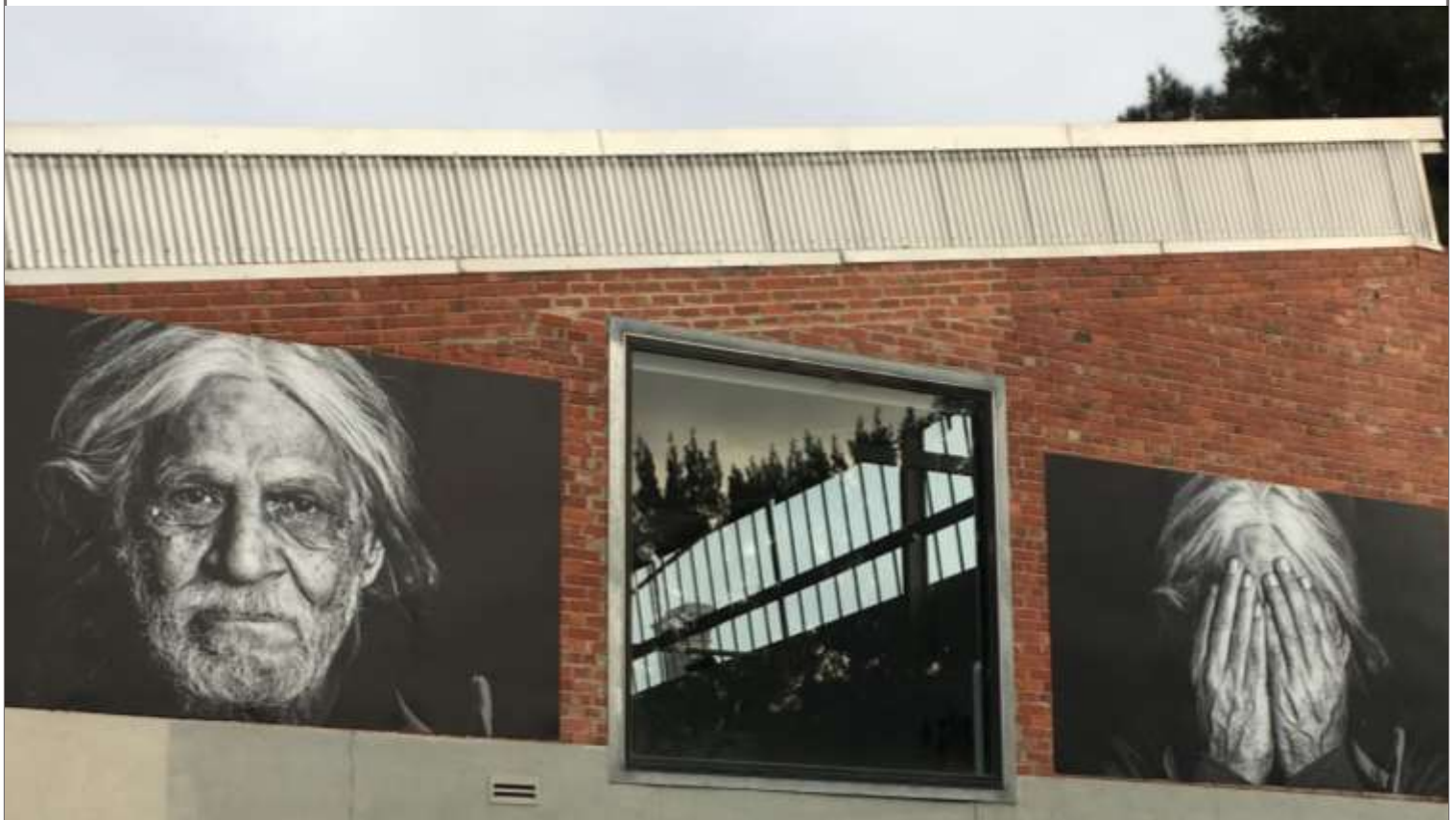


- where an item has been donated, it should be returned to the donor or estate
- seek to transfer the item to a more appropriate collecting institution
- if purchased, the item will be auctioned/sold, with the proceeds of sale used to further develop or care for the Collection
- before disposal, all items should be considered by Council's Visual and Public Art Curator and Art and Heritage Collections Officer for use as educative/interpretive tools
- after all other options have been exhausted, works may be dismantled, destroyed or recycled, if appropriate

### Winding up

Maribyrnong City Council operates under the Local Government Act 1989. The Collection forms part of Council's assets and is managed in accordance with the Local Government Act. Any divestment of the Collection as a whole can only be undertaken after relevant legal and governance advice is obtained. In the event that Maribyrnong Council is wound up, the Collection must be offered to other collecting institutions to ensure that the Collection is maintained as a public and community asset. Other legal and tax obligations that may apply to donating the Collection is as per the Local Government Act.

*Below: Daniela Rodriguez, *Uncle Larry*, Location: rear wall of Smorgon Gallery at Footscray Community Arts Centre (2018). It forms part of Maribyrnong City Council's Public Art Collection.*



# Collection management

## Guiding principles

The guiding principles for overall collections management are the *National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries V1.5*, September 2016.

## Who manages the collection?

Maribyrnong City Council's Arts and Culture team is responsible for the daily management and development of the Collection, ensuring it is researched, documented, catalogued, handled, stored, preserved, interpreted and displayed in accordance with this Collection Policy.

## Legal and Ethical Guidelines

### 1. First People's cultural material in the Collection

Council acknowledges that it has a mandatory obligation under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* to register Victorian Aboriginal collection items in its possession with Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (AAV). In instances where the provenance of certain Aboriginal artefacts is unknown, Council will seek advice from AAV.

In accordance with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act*, Council also acknowledges that:

- it is illegal to buy, sell or harm traditional Aboriginal objects without a cultural heritage permit
- it is illegal to remove Aboriginal objects from Victoria without a cultural heritage permit, excluding loans between interstate museums
- human remains, secret and sacred material belonging to the traditional owners should be repatriated

In accordance with Australian Museums and Galleries Association (AMaGA) guidelines and other international guidelines, requests from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities for the return of cultural items held by Maribyrnong City Council will be given serious consideration.

### 2. Occupational Health and Safety

The Arts and Heritage Collection is managed in accordance with Council's *Occupational Health and Safety Policy 2018*. Council is responsible for OHS training and compliance for current and new curatorial and collections management staff in every aspect of managing a mixed collection, including researching, cataloguing, caring for, storing, installing, moving, packing, interpreting and exhibiting.

## Record Keeping and Documentation

Council is committed to maintaining comprehensive and complete collection documentation. Records required for best-practice collection management include:

- Acquisition Proposal Form
- Cataloguing Worksheet
- Cataloguing Manual
- Loan Application Form
- Donor / Gift Bequest Form
- Conservation Report
- Photography Permission Form
- De-accession Proposal Form
- Council Assets Register



- Collection Register
- Copyright and Reproduction Permission
- Facilities Report
- Incoming Loan Form
- Outward Loan Form
- Loans register
- Significance Statement Template
- Disaster Preparedness Plan

Below: Created by stonemasons James Taylor and sons (artist unknown), *The Citizens' Memorial* known as *Victory Statue* (1900) Location: Footscray Park, Ballarat Road, Footscray. It is part of Maribyrnong City Council's Heritage Collection.





## Registration and Cataloguing

The current Visual Art, Public Art and Heritage Collections are registered into Council's Asset Management Register. It is recommended that a dedicated, industry-standard, collections management software be used for the future cataloguing of the Collection. This software should be compatible with the current Asset Register.

Procedures for cataloguing art and heritage items are set out in the Cataloguing Manual. Cataloguing should take place at the earliest opportunity following the decision to acquire and, if necessary, be entered into Council's Assets Register. The Arts and Culture team is responsible for expanding the basic registration records to full catalogue records by:

- researching and documenting the significance and provenance of each item in the Collection
- recording detailed exhibition and access history for each item in the catalogue
- maintaining up-to-date movement and storage records for each item in the Collection
- ensuring appropriate copyright agreements are in place and any restrictions or conditions relating to the item or to the moral rights of the artist are fully documented in the catalogue
- managing data security and integrity

## Significance Statements

Recognising the usefulness of significance assessment as a collection management tool, a significance statement is included as part of each the following:

- acquisition proposal
- loan or exhibition response
- deaccession proposal

## Collection Care

Council will provide museum-standard and best practice collection storage for all items in the Art and Heritage Collection and temporarily in their care such as inward loans. To achieve this outcome, storage facilities will be planned into the future development of Council's Community and Civic Precinct and any future Council-run cultural facilities in the municipality.

## Preventive Conservation

The Arts and Culture team exercises preventive conservation by:

- securely housing in the art storage rooms or, where necessary, in collection-dedicated off-site storage all artworks and objects not on display
- storing collection items according to each item's specific needs, using archival materials and retrieval systems to minimise handling
- maintaining a stable environment (temperature and humidity)
- integrating cleaning, condition reporting and pest management schedules
- training staff and volunteers in preventive conservation including handling and storage techniques
- maintaining public artworks in accordance with the manual provided by the artist

## Restorative Conservation

Approved heritage and materials conservators and accredited fabrication and sculpture experts are engaged for restoration, conservation and structural repairs

## Damage Reporting

### Public Art Collection

Assessment of outdoor works of art, memorials and monuments are assessed every five years only by professional Collections staff – either the Visual and Public Art Curator, Art and Heritage Collections Officer and/or external conservation and collections experts. Staff from the Open Space team and the Park Ranger can consult with Collections staff if any possible damage to an outdoor work is identified.

### Visual Art and Heritage Collection (indoor)

Annual audits of the Visual Art and Heritage Collection are to be conducted and condition reports prepared by the Art and Heritage Collections Officer should damage or deterioration be detected. Priorities for conservation and preservation are to be set.

### Disaster Preparedness

The Arts and Culture team, supported by Council, commits to liaising with AMaGA about changing standards and procedures in collection management that relate to climate change. A Disaster/Emergency Kit will be prepared to be located in the art storage areas.

## Collection access

Maribyrnong City Council strives to ensure that arts and culture are a mechanism for establishing fruitful and sustainable cultural partnerships that attract residents and businesses to the municipality. These processes are about genuine place-making, building social cohesion and a vehicle for inspiring the community through imagination, artistic excellence and well-researched and balanced discourse relevant to the human condition, the contemporary world and the history of the municipality. Researching, displaying and interpreting the Collection's art and heritage enables the community to learn about the municipality's history and contemporary perspectives and these activities are an integral part of Maribyrnong City Council's responsibilities as custodians of the Collection on behalf of the community. Council's vision is for the Collection to contribute to these goals and to provide community access to the Collection in a variety of ways that will enhance awareness, understanding and appreciation of art and history.

### Display and Exhibition

Council commits to exhibiting and displaying the Collection in publicly-accessible spaces in Council buildings. Priority is given to spaces with suitable hanging environments that may provide opportunities for display. The Collection may also be exhibited and/or installed on suitable Council-owned land and sites.

The Collection will be displayed according to museum standards, with objects being rotated in accordance with their preservation needs. Final decision on the location/display of items lies with Council's Arts and Culture Unit. Exhibition development will be guided by the Art and Heritage Collection Policy's Vision and Key Themes and in accordance with construction of purpose-built art storage facilities.

### Interpretation and Public Programs

Interpretation of the Collection is guided by the Art and Heritage Collection Policy's Vision and Key Themes. When Council provides a formal gallery space, Council's Art and Culture Unit can explore the production of public programs to support the Collection that facilitates life-long learning and understanding of Maribyrnong's cultural and heritage legacy and artistic contemporary practices,. This includes public access to the Collection through a program of exhibitions and public education programs. Examples of these may include

outreach programs; and relationships with Maribyrnong's various cultural organisations that gives rise to the potential to acquire material of significance to the Collection that they are unable to care for themselves.

## Collaborative Display

Council's Arts and Culture Unit will partner with local institutions, such as public libraries, to exhibit the Collection and make it more widely available for enjoyment, research and education. Works will be recommended for external display according to their conservation needs and guaranteed safety.

## Digital Access

The Art and Heritage Collection will be made available for digital access via the Australian Museum and Galleries Association's (AMaGa) free collections cataloguing software: Victorian Collections.

Victorian Collections' software is currently being further fine-tuned to accommodate the requirements of the industry. This will ensure that the community and researchers can access the Collection when and where it suits them.

The Art and Heritage Collection is featured on social media platforms to inspire, educate and promote the significance of the Collection to the community and share stories relevant to the histories of this municipality.

## Digitisation Strategy

The Art and Heritage Collection prioritises significant items that are fragile and rare for digitisation purposes.

## Outward Loans

From time to time, Council may agree to allow Collection items to be loaned out to public institutions for inclusion into exhibitions. Loan applications will be assessed by the curatorial staff of the Arts and Culture team. Decisions will be based on conditions ensuring the safety, security and appropriate display and storage of the item/s on loan.

The following conditions apply to all outward loans:

- the borrowing institution agrees to meet all loan conditions
- loans will remain in the possession of the borrower until returned to the lender (Council) at the end of the loan period stipulated in the agreement
- the borrower must arrange appropriate insurance; a copy of this insurance policy must be submitted to Council with the loan application
- the loan period will be agreed between the lender and borrower and is subject to review – applications for extensions of the loan period must be made prior to the loan expiry date, which, for conservation purposes, is a maximum of 12 months unless extended by the Visual Art and Heritage Working Group
- applications will be considered from any public institution, however applications from borrowing organisations with AMaGA accreditation will be prioritised
- applications from private collectors will be considered if their intention is to place the item on public display for the benefit of the Maribyrnong community

All loans must be documented as outlined in the terms of the Art and Heritage Collection Policy.



## Inward Loans

Council may borrow items from public institutions, collections and/or individuals for exhibition and display to complement works held in its own Collection only when (and not until) a purpose-built storage facility has been built on Council's premises. Inward loans for display or exhibitions will be subject to the terms and conditions agreed between Maribyrnong City Council and the lending organisation.

- Borrowed items shall only be sought for specific exhibitions or research and for fixed periods of time.
- Adequate insurance provisions must be arranged and a copy of the insurance policy provided to the relevant institutions and/or individuals.
- Council will exercise the same care with respect to borrowed material as it does for its own Collection.
- Council will provide agreed and appropriate storage and display conditions for borrowed items for the term of the loan.

Inward loans must be accompanied by a condition report prepared by the conservator or other authorised representative of the lending institution. The report will include a written description of the item and clear, descriptive photographs including any areas of existing damage noted. On arrival at Maribyrnong City Council the work will be checked against the condition report and the report signed by curatorial staff of the Arts and Culture team.

*Below: Heesco, Dragon, mural (2019) Location: corner of Paisley and Victoria Streets, Part of Council's StreetWORKS Program and Maribyrnong City Council's Art and Heritage Collection.*



## Policy context

The Policy was guided by a recognition that the City of Maribyrnong is located within the traditional lands of the Kulin Nation. The Traditional Owners have a deep and profound connection with the land, and a vibrant and strong artistic heritage and contemporary culture. Council is committed to reflecting Maribyrnong's rich Aboriginal culture in the past and the present by adhering to the following guidelines and strategies:

- Australia Council for the Arts, *Protocols for Producing Indigenous Australian Visual Arts*, 2007
- Museums Australia, *Continuous Cultures, Ongoing Responsibilities: Principles and Guidelines for Australian Museums Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage*, 2005
- Australian Museums and Galleries Association, *Indigenous Roadmap*, 2018
- *Aboriginal Heritage Act* 2006 and amendments, 2016

The Art and Heritage Collection Policy sits within Maribyrnong Council's social, cultural and planning frameworks. These include, but are not limited to:

- *Maribyrnong City Council Plan* 2017-2021
- *Arts and Culture Strategy* 2018-2023
- *Public Art Strategy* 2019-2029
- *Memorials in Public Open Space Policy* 2010
- *Heritage Plan* 2002
- *Procurement Policy* 2019
- *Instruments of Sub-Delegation – Operating Authority* 2019
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy* 2018

There are also a range of industry standards that inform and support this Policy. The Collection is managed in accordance with international museological and collection management standards as articulated in the following documents:

- *National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries* 2016
- *The Burra Charter – The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*, 2013
- *Significance 2.0: a guide to assessing the significance of collections*, 2009
- International Council on Museums, *Code of Ethics for Museums*, 2013
- *Australian Best Practice Guide to Collecting Cultural Material*, 2015
- Museums Australia, *Code of Ethics*, 1999
- *Code on the Ethics of Co-Existence in Conserving Significant Places* (adopted by Australia ICOMOS 1998)
- Oral History Association of Australia – *Guidelines of Ethical Practice*, 2007
- *Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works*, 1979
- Australian Government, Department of Communications and the Arts, *Cultural Gifts Program Guide*, 2019

## Policy Development

This Collection Policy is the product of a review of the former draft versions of *Maribyrnong City Council's Art and Civic History Collection Management Plan*, 2018 and *Art and Civic History Collection Policy*, 2018. It incorporates feedback from two reviews conducted by the Australian Museums and Galleries Association's Museum Accreditation Program (MAP); discussions with Council's Arts and Culture staff and former Chair, HAC (Heritage Advisory Committee); two consultations with internal and external stakeholders; and a review of national and international standards for museum collection management.

## Policy Review

This Policy will be reviewed on a five-year schedule from the date of endorsement by Council.

## Glossary of Terms

### Acquisition

The process by which Council [may] legally and formally accept items into its collection.

### Civic

Refers to items from town halls and those with a provenance in council business, defined as the administrative and business functions of the elected representative and their staff and/or committees.

### Collection care

Refers to the methods of storage and handling and display of collection items as well as basic approaches to condition reporting, environmental monitoring and pest control.

### Commission

The process by which someone has been formally commissioned or selected by a formal process to undertake a special piece of work or contract in return for payment.

### Community consultation

The process by which a group of community members are invited to comment on a policy or process.

### Cultural Gifts program

The Australian federal government program allowing approved organisations to receive gifts of money or property for which the donor may claim a tax deduction.

### Deaccessioning

The process by which Council [may] legally and formally remove items from its Collection.

### Due diligence

An action that is considered reasonable in order to ensure the Collection items are maintained in accordance with recommended museum standards or to ensure the safety of people working with or viewing the Collection.

### Ephemeral art

An artwork created with the intentions of being temporary or impermanent, transitory or short-lived. It is often made from biodegradable materials or materials that fade or disintegrate over time.

### Exhibitions

Refers to a curated display of Maribyrnong City Council Collection items and may include items on loan from an external organisation or individual.

### Exhibition Space

Walls where artworks can be displayed but the primary use of the room is for another purpose than the arts for example: offices, hallways, reception areas.

### Gallery

A large room or series of rooms that are fit-for-purpose, museum-standard and dedicated to art exhibitions, public programs and curatorial programming which are widely accessible to the public.



## Heritage

The places, objects and intangible culture of Maribyrnong City that remains from our past.

## Legal title

The right to make decisions and enact responsibilities in relation to a Collection item.

## Loans

Loans are the processes by which items in a collection may be temporarily exchanged between approved institutions or organisations. Outward loans refers to works lent from a collection; inward loans refers to works brought into an institution or organisation.

## Memorabilia

Objects that are collected because they are associated with a person or event that is of significance to the Maribyrnong City Council.

## Preventive conservation

This is part of collection care and is undertaken to slow deterioration of or prevent damage to cultural material.

## Provenance

This refers to the earliest known history and ownership of an object or material and is important to confirm when acquiring new works to ensure the work is not stolen or a forgery and that it has been created and offered for sale, donation or bequest in an ethically sound manner.

## Restorative conservation

Also part of collection care and undertaken to modify the existing material and structure of an object to represent a known earlier state. All restoration treatment applied to an object must be easily detectable and if possible, removable.

## Significance

A statement of significance (SoS) is a summary of how or why an artwork or heritage item or collection is significant, identifying the values, meaning and importance of the work or object. The SoS is based on research and consultation as far as possible and is produced and written in accordance with *Significance 2.0: a guide to assessing the significance of collections* (Collections Council of Australia 2009 – <https://www.arts.gov.au/sites/g/files/net1761/f/significance-2.0.pdf>)

## The Collection

All works of art and historical objects in the permanent Collection owned by Council and listed on the assets register

## References

This Collection Policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents generated by Maribyrnong City Council:

- Maribyrnong City Council *Arts and Culture Strategy 2018-2023*
- Maribyrnong City Council *Public Art Strategy 2019-2029*
- Visual and Public Art Working Group Terms of Reference
- *Council Plan 2017-2021*
- Maribyrnong City Council *Procurement Policy 2016-2017*
- Asset Management Policy and Strategy
- *Maribyrnong Heritage Plan 2002*
- *Maribyrnong Open Space Strategy*
- *Memorials in Public Open Space Policy 2010*

- *Heritage Plan 2002*
- Procurement Policy 2019
- Instruments of Sub-Delegation – Operating Authority 2019
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy 2018*
- Acquisition Recommendation Form
- Deaccession Recommendation Form
- Cataloguing Procedures

And with the following documents guiding best practice in the museum and collection sector (all accessed in late September and early October 2019):

- Australian Centre for Contemporary Art,  
<https://acca.melbourne/education/resources/public-art/what-is-public-art/>
- The Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material,  
<https://www.aiccm.org.au>
- International Council of Museums (ICOM) Code of Ethics for Museums 2017  
<https://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ICOM-code-En-web.pdf>
- International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)  
<https://australia.icomos.org/about-us/australia-icomos/>
- National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries Version 1.5 September 2016  
[https://amagavic.org.au/assets/National\\_Standards\\_1\\_5.pdf](https://amagavic.org.au/assets/National_Standards_1_5.pdf)
- The Burra Charter, 2013  
<https://australia.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Burra-Charter-2013-Adopted-31.10.2013.pdf>
- Significance 2.0  
<https://www.arts.gov.au/sites/g/files/net1761/f/significance-2.0.pdf>

# Art and Heritage Collection Policy – Recommendations

The following recommendations actioned against the objectives of the Policy will ensure the Collection meets its vision, principles and aspirations to be vibrant and relevant to the Maribyrnong community.

## *Objective 1 - Valuing arts and culture in the municipality*

### **Recommendation:**

- Council to invest in conserving and growing the Collection through restoration and acquisitions particularly with reference to key works by local artists to demonstrate commitment to arts and culture in Maribyrnong.
- Council maintains ongoing annual investment in public art as per the *Public Art Strategy 2019-2029*.
- Council to commit to developing a purpose-built, museum-standard, public accessible gallery in the municipality to house, display and invite access to the Collection and enable display of temporary exhibitions and curatorial programs.

## *Objective 2 - Adopting clear, accountable and best practice collection management processes*

### **Recommendation:**

- To develop and adopt best practice, industry standard collection management procedures and reporting through the endorsement of an Art and Heritage Collection Policy.
- To provide appropriate annual resourcing to oversee and manage the Collection in particular, part-time qualified Collections staff to support specialised Collection care, access, programming and research; and undertake significance assessments of key works as required.
- To ensure Arts and Culture staff participate in relevant professional development opportunities and training to remain informed on collection management practices and are qualified to advocate for municipal collections.
- Minimise the spread of Collection responsibility between different Council teams, if required, to prevent potential damage and impact to works in the Collection.

## *Objective 3 – The provision of industry-approved storage facilities for housing works in a range of media to ensure the stability of the Collection and preserve its asset value*

### **Recommendation:**

- To provide a purpose-built, museum standard storage facility to professionally house and care for a range of media and works in the Collection in perpetuity. The facility should ideally be located adjacent to the administrative, research and exhibitions area.



- To meet industry-approved standards, the storage facilities for a collection such as Maribyrnong City Council's should be a minimum of 100 square metres with custom-built shelving and other storage systems to house all mediums in the Collection, UV light and temperature controlled, lockable, watertight and pest-free with large table for research, auditing, conservation work, digitisation and other tasks related to the management of the Collection.
- To manage risks to Council's Collection displayed in non-museum standard spaces and take steps to minimise potential damage and asset depreciation due to UV light, temperature changes, theft and handling damage.

*Objective 4 - Ensuring significance assessments are undertaken and a 'Statement of Significance' is written for all items ([https://www.arts.gov.au/sites/default/files/significance-2.0.pdf?acsf\\_files\\_redirect](https://www.arts.gov.au/sites/default/files/significance-2.0.pdf?acsf_files_redirect)) to reinforce the Collection's value and integrity*

**Recommendation:**

To ensure best practice collection management procedures are adopted and maintained that Council commits to resourcing a qualified and dedicated staff member, on a part time basis, specifically to manage the Collection task portfolio (incl. significance assessments, cataloguing, accessioning, deaccessioning, storage and renewal management, installation/de-installation, insurance audits, documentation, interpretation, research and arranging valuation).

*Objective 5 - Commissioning conservation assessments and treatments as needed*

**Recommendation:**

Council to commit to a minimum of an annual, renewal budget of \$30,000 allocated to Arts and Culture to allow specialised services to undertake condition assessments, conservation, repairs and audits of all four categories (visual art, public art; civic history; history and heritage) of the Collection to maintain asset value and calibre.

*Objective 6 - Developing guidelines for exhibiting, displaying and interpreting the Collection in public spaces*

**Recommendations:**

- Council to develop and adopt a best practice and dedicated suite of guidelines and standardised templates for professional exhibition, display and interpretation of the Collection in civic spaces.
- Council to invest in research and documentation on items in the Collection to inform displays, exhibitions and online catalogues.

*Objective 7 - Promoting cooperation between Council departments to cohesively document, preserve, celebrate and interpret the heritage of the City*

**Recommendation:**

- Key items in the Collection to be professionally documented, captioned and attributed in all promotional materials across Council.

- Arts and Culture to collaborate internally with other departments to enhance better awareness of the Collection and identify opportunities to celebrate the heritage of the City through the Collection.
- Arts and Culture to advocate more broadly for the Collection to Council management and Councillors to facilitate greater appreciation of the cultural capital and future planning of engaging the community with these assets.

*Objective 8 - Providing opportunities for the public to access and engage with the Collection and to understand the social, historical, artistic, cultural and environmental development of Maribyrnong*

**Recommendation:**

- Council to commit to a secure, publicly accessible exhibition space within the community spaces of the Community and Civic Precinct (former Footscray Town Hall) to share items from the Collection with the community.
- Council to commit to the development of a dedicated purpose-built civic gallery (as part of the NeXT Cultural Facility) to display, build and celebrate its Collection through exhibitions, public programs, and engagement with other collecting institutions for curated temporary exhibitions.
- Council to commit to installing professional picture hanging systems and lighting in civic buildings, where possible, for the professional display and rotation of Collection artworks.
- Council to invest in museum-standard cabinets in civic buildings for the secure display of three-dimensional items from the Collection and temporary exhibitions.
- Council to develop digital programs for broader community access to and interaction with the Collection.
- Council to invite artists to respond to and interpret Maribyrnong through engagement programs with the municipal Collection.

*Objective 9 - Acquiring works of art and heritage excellence with significance to the City of Maribyrnong and in line with the policy's vision and key themes*

**Recommendation:**

- See recommendations in Objectives 10 and 12.
- Council to commit to the Actions and Recommendations of the endorsed *Public Art Strategy 2019-2029*, including budget allocation.

*Objective 10 - Fostering and supporting the creative economy by investing in local artists and/or artists with prior strong connections to the municipality and acquiring their significant works*

**Recommendation:**

- Establish an annual acquisition budget administered by Arts and Culture with a minimum of \$15,000 to maintain existing Collection strengths and build the diversity of the Collection through such sources as prizes, directly from local and other artists (if unrepresented), commercial galleries, collectors and auction houses; and also through direct commissions that reflect the unique character of Maribyrnong, applying the Policy's Acquisition Criteria.

*Objective 11 - Fostering a supportive working relationship with the arts, history and heritage network operating within Maribyrnong City.*

**Recommendation:**

- Key representatives with appropriate skills and expertise from Maribyrnong's arts, history and heritage networks to be included in the formation of a new Art and Heritage Collection Advisory Group (AHCAG).
- Council to continue to work collaboratively and proactively with representatives from Maribyrnong's arts, history and heritage local organisations and networks to foster shared research, curatorship, display and community engagement initiatives to benefit the Collection.

*Objective 12 - Attracting donations, bequests and other external support because of its professional management, standing and accessibility.*

**Recommendation:**

- Council to develop a Donations and Bequests strategy for the Collection to actively scope and identify appropriate external avenues for investment and support.
- Consideration be given to the appropriateness of the Cultural Gifts Program to build the Collection.