



*The Great American  
Songbook Foundation*

*Michael Feinstein, Founder*

AT THE CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

## **Library and Archives Collection Management Policy**

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## **1. Introduction**

The Great American Songbook Foundation (GASF) is a 501(c)(3) organization overseen by a 20+ member Board of Directors. Michael Feinstein founded the organization in 2007. It was originally known as The Michael Feinstein Foundation for the Preservation and Education of the Great American Songbook. In 2011, GASF located its offices, archives, library and museum gallery on the fourth floor of the newly-constructed Palladium at the Carmel Regional Performing Arts Center (hereinafter “CPA”) in Carmel, Indiana. In June 2011, the GASF and the CPA entered into an affiliation agreement that will allow the GASF to benefit from the staff of the CPA while permitting the CPA to take advantage of the Foundation’s national exposure. GASF houses its Library and Archives (L&A) in off-site storage.

These Collection Management Policies are intended to outline library and archives best practices for the care, management, and use of the GASF’s physical and intellectual collections in order to achieve the Foundation’s mission as well as provide a guide for future decisions regarding the collection.

The Songbook Foundation is a qualified 501(c)(3) non-profit organization under the rules of the Internal Revenue Service.

## **2. Mission statement**

The Mission of the GASF is to inspire and educate by celebrating the Great American Songbook. The mission of the Library and Archives (L&A) is to collect materials representing the cultural and social significance of the Great American Songbook, to encourage creative thinking, scholarly inquiry, and lifelong learning.

Generally, the Golden Age of the Great American Songbook is defined as the canon of American popular music created between the 1920s and 1960s. Eligibility criteria include a song’s lasting popularity via reinterpretations as well as its American provenance or incorporation into American culture. Since the Golden Age, new songwriters have created new American classics. These songs, and their creators, should be included on a periodic basis as determined by the Collections Committee.

## **3. Management**

Management of the Library and Archives and the administration of functions set out in this policy are the responsibility of the Executive Director and collections staff of the GASF who are administratively and physically located at the Songbook Foundation headquarters. The exception to this responsibility is control of the Education Collection, which falls under the purview of the Manager of Programs with direction from the Executive Director and collections staff. The Executive Director reports to the President and CEO of the Center for the Performing Arts who reports to the Board of Directors.



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**4. Ownership of collection**

All material that is formally and legally received by the GASF, either through donation, pre-arranged bequest, transfer, purchase or by other means, shall be the permanent physical property of the GASF. All materials legally received under this policy shall be property of the GASF regardless of its physical location.

The GASF does not own the copyright to any materials in its collection unless that copyright has been explicitly acquired. As stewards of the items in its collection, the GASF reserves the right to control access to and downstream use of sound and images from its collections. The fair use doctrine permits the use of sound and images to promote exhibitions, and for commentary, teaching and research purposes. This is permitted regardless of the copyright status of the materials. By definition, materials in the public domain are exempt from copyright prohibitions.

**5. Review of policy**

The Collections Committee, with advice from collections staff, may initiate periodic reviews of the collection, its policy, and its operating procedures at least once every three (3) years.

**6. Authority for this policy**

This policy was adopted by the GASF Board of Directors on \_\_\_\_\_. It shall provide the framework in which the Library and Archives operate, and remain in force until it is withdrawn or amended following a Collections Committee review as provided in the above clause 5.

**7. Desirable items for the collection**

When accepting or seeking new material for the Library and Archives, the GASF will generally give priority to the following types of materials related to the Great American Songbook that have musical, historical and cultural significance including:

- Personal papers (including compositions and arrangements), photographs, recordings, and research materials of individual performers, lyricists, and composers, as well as of scholars, journalists, and critics, who have written about the Great American Songbook.
- Personal papers, business records, photographs, and recordings of individuals involved in the business of the Great American Songbook, including stage, screen and recording managers, producers, executives, and disc jockeys.
- Archives of businesses and other organizations, including theaters, record labels, management agencies, booking agencies, radio stations, recording studios, and publishing and film production companies.
- Books published on topics relating to the Great American Songbook; reference works at the general and advanced research level; songbooks and sheet music for



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individual songs (unless duplicated in other institutions); and academic dissertations and theses.

- Musical instruments, awards, costumes, and other 3-dimensional artifacts related to the Great American Songbook.

(See Appendix A for a full listing of appropriate materials.)

## **8. Collection acquisition**

The GASF L&A may acquire material through donation, pre-arranged bequest, transfer or purchase. The L&A cannot accept items on a permanent loan basis. The L&A cannot accept materials with the condition to place items on permanent display as this requirement runs counter to preservation best practices. It does not guarantee that donated materials will be exhibited, permanently retained, or preserved in their current state. The L&A will make every effort to fulfill the Donor's requests as long as those requests do not run counter to best practice and/or this collection management policy.

The L&A recognizes that the papers of an individual or the records of an organization should remain together. When another repository possesses a substantial number of the papers or records of an individual or organization, all efforts will be made to ensure that the remainder is housed at that same repository with the Donor's approval.

The collections staff may purchase published materials that complement the mission of the organization. Small collections of items that enrich existing collections or have minimal processing and storage costs may be accepted by the collections staff without Collections Committee approval provided the item(s) comply with the acquisition policy.

## **9. Acquisition authority**

A Collections Committee will determine whether an item(s) offered by donation, pre-arranged bequest, transfer or purchase is to be accepted into the L&A collection. (Items which do not meet the basic selection criteria 10.1 – 10.4 listed below will not be forwarded to the committee for a decision).

The Collections Committee will consist of the following persons who will use this Collection Policy to guide their decisions: At least three (3) members of the GASF Board of Directors, a non-Board member with library or archives experience, the Executive Director – GASF, Archivist – GASF, Development staff person, Founder Michael Feinstein, CEO – CPA & GASF.

The Governance Committee of the GASF Board of Directors facilitates committee assignments.

The Collections Committee will meet as needed, but at least quarterly, to accept or decline donations by applying the Selection Criteria (Section 10, page 5) and through



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debate and open voting. A quorum of the Collections Committee, including staff members, is required to accept a donation. The Archivist will place the deciding vote in the event of a deadlock. Meetings may occur by phone or through electronic mail. The committee chair will provide a list of accepted donations at the regularly scheduled GASF board meeting. As stewards of the public trust and to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest, individual Collections Committee members or GASF board members may not accept donations on behalf of the GASF.

The decision to spend more than \$2,500 to acquire and/or ship a collection must have unanimous approval from the Collections Committee and be ratified by the GASF Board of Directors. Individual published materials purchased for the library do not need Board approval.

**Note: The immediate priority is to care for the existing collection.**

In all instances, the Collections Committee will utilize the Selection Criteria listed below in the decision-making process. The minimum requirements for accepting new material into the collection is compliance with points 10.1 – 10.4

**10. Selection criteria for accepting material into the collection**

- 10.1 The item(s) relates to the mission of the GASF.
- 10.2 The item(s) has a good story that would enhance its historical value.
- 10.3 The donor or vendor has legal title, free and clear of any adverse claims or encumbrances, to offer the item(s) to the L&A.
- 10.4 The item(s) is not duplicated in the L&A.
- 10.5 The item(s) is in good original condition.
- 10.6 The L&A has adequate resources for the storage, management, and care of the potential acquisition.
- 10.7 There are no restrictions to prevent display or research use, such as legal status, cultural content, and/or physical condition.
- 10.8 The item(s) is best suited for our collection and not that of another institution.

**11. Declining item(s)**

If the decision is made to decline an item offered for donation, collections staff will offer alternatives to the donor including:

- 11.1 Keep the item(s) in the family or give to friends.
- 11.2 Refer to a more appropriate institution.
- 11.3 Sell the item(s).
- 11.4 Offer it to a charitable organization.
- 11.5 Discard the item(s) by disposal or recycling as a last resort.



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## 12. Care of the collection

Accession documentation required:

- A letter of acknowledgement and deed-of-gift mailed to the donor from the GASF.
- Donor's Form 8283 signed and returned, if applicable.
- Information regarding the collection, its creator/donor and provenance as available.
- An accession number assigned to the collection in collection management system (the GASF accession numbering system includes the year and a number in chronological order of acceptance ex. A2019-001.)
- The collection physically marked with its accession number and donor/creator name.
- The physical location of the collection recorded in the collection management system.

## 13. Conservation and storage

The GASF will make a determined commitment and effort to provide the best possible physical care for the collection according to current best practice as adopted by professional organizations such as: Society of American Archivists, American Association of Museums, International Association of Sound Archives and American Library Association.

## 14. Access and Use

The L&A is committed to preserving the collections it stewards and making them available for research and performance as soon as possible after receipt. At the same time, the L&A may have legal, institutional, donor, or other obligation to restrict access to some collections or parts of collections. The L&A may limit access to some collections to maintain the security and viability of those materials.

## 15. Deaccessioning

Deaccessioning is the administrative process whereby an item(s) is formally removed from the collection AFTER it has been accessioned. Deaccessioning is distinct from weeding, the customary act of removing item-level materials from a collection during processing. It is distinct from disposal, which is the physical act of rehoming, selling, recycling, or discarding an object.

### 14.1 Deaccessioning criteria

Criteria for assessing whether an item should be considered for deaccessioning are:

- The item(s) do not meet the criteria listed in section 10 of this document;
- The item(s) is irrevocably damaged or deteriorated beyond repair or endangers the collection (e.g. mold, vermin);



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- The item(s) falls outside the scope of the collection policy
- The item(s) is duplicated in the collection

## 14.2 **Deaccessioning procedure**

Collections staff shall provide the Collections Committee with written documentation for each item or group of items selected for deaccessioning. The documentation will include a reasoned recommendation for formal removal from the L&A. Approval by a quorum of the Collections Committee will be required to formally deaccession the materials. Once approved, a deaccession record will be created in the collection management system.

## 14.3 **Disposal of deaccessioned material**

Once items are deaccessioned, the Collections Committee must decide on an appropriate form of disposal whether return to donor, sale, gift, transfer, exchange, alternative internal use (eg. Educational tool) or destruction.

Collections staff must insure that the deaccessioned material is free of any conditions that would interfere with their disposal.

The proceeds of any sale of deaccessioned materials will be used to further the preservation efforts of the GASF.

Deaccessioned materials are to be destroyed only when the item is irreparably damaged; lacks historical, aesthetic, social or economic value; or creates an unsafe environment. As stewards of the public trust and to avoid any appearance of a conflict of interest, GASF staff, CPA staff and all Board members will be prohibited from acquiring any deaccessioned item except as a last resort.

## 16. **Loans of item(s) to and from the collection**

There are two (2) types of loans: incoming and outgoing. The Library and Archives will consider granting only those outgoing loan requests that justify the risks inherent in sending materials out of the building. An outgoing loan is granted primarily for exhibition or scholarly purposes to other cultural institutions with prescribed time periods. GASF may not accept such loan unless there is a written loan agreement signed by both parties and a completed General Facility Report on file from the borrowing institution. (See Appendix B)

The Library and Archives uses standard loan agreements. (See Appendix C)

GASF will provide door-to-door insurance coverage for incoming loans. The borrowing institution will provide door-to-door insurance for outgoing loans.

The next scheduled review will begin in October 2022.