

Arts Centre Melbourne

VCE Art Making & Exhibiting Education Resource



Contents

This resource is for VCE students and teachers studying Art Making & Exhibiting. The resource supports students understanding how Arts Centre Melbourne manages its Australian Performing Arts Collection and Public Art Collections, including curation, exhibition design and development, conservation, and collection management.

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About Arts Centre Melbourne

Arts Centre Melbourne sits on the lands of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung People. The site has been a gathering place for storytelling, community, and culture for First Nations people for millennia.

In recent times, the same place has become home to the [Melbourne Arts Precinct](#) – one of the largest concentrations of cultural and creative organisations and artists in the world.

Together we inspire and connect audiences, no matter who or where they are. We are proudly home to four Resident Companies: [The Australian Ballet](#), [Melbourne Symphony Orchestra](#), [Melbourne Theatre Company](#) and [Opera Australia](#). We are also home to many of our state and national performing arts companies and major festivals including [Bangarra Dance Theatre](#), [Australian Chamber Orchestra](#), [Ilbijerri Theatre Company](#), [Victorian Opera](#), [Circa](#), [Bell Shakespeare](#), [RISING](#) and [Melbourne International Comedy Festival](#).

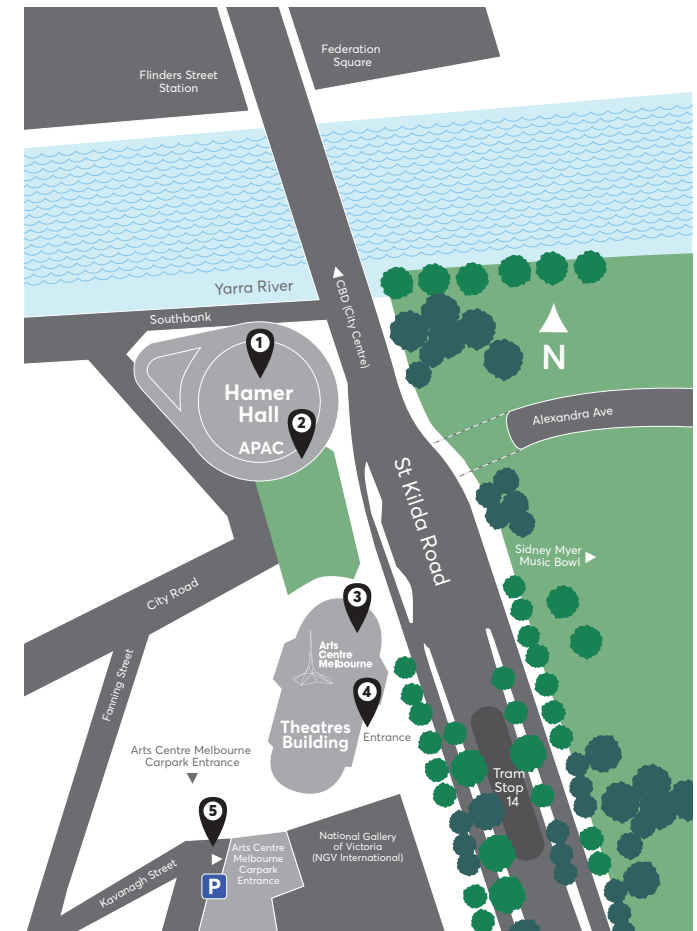
In addition to sharing stories on our stages, we are also proud to preserve, explore and celebrate Australia's rich and ongoing contributions to performing and visual arts through our custodianship of the world-class [Australian Performing Arts Collection](#), [Australian Music Vault](#) and [Public Art Collection](#).

How to Visit Arts Centre Melbourne

The Australian Music Vault and the Public Art Collection displayed in Arts Centre Melbourne's foyers are open to the public, and you are welcome to bring your school groups during our [opening hours](#).

For a self-guided experience, you are welcome to reference the appendix "Art Collection Your Self-Guided Tour" or our [online self-guided resource](#).

To organise a guided tours of our foyers or [APAC](#), our new storage, research and education facility, please contact schools@artscentremelbourne.com.au



1. Hamer Hall
2. Australian Performing Arts Collection (APAC)
3. Theatres Building
4. Australian Music Vault
5. Art Centre Melbourne Carpark Entrance

About Arts Centre Melbourne's Collections

What makes Arts Centre Melbourne's collections unique? A large portion of our collections are about how the creative mind works. Our Australian Performing Arts Collection holds hundreds of thousands of items created by skilled artists and used by inspiring performers and crew during a performance. These items include costumes, set designs, props, posters, scripts and lyric notes, photographs... the list goes on! To Arts Centre Melbourne, these are integral to telling the stories of the performing arts, and the incredibly talented people that take a show from page to stage.

As well as our vast collection relating to relating to performances, Arts Centre Melbourne also has a collection of paintings, sculptures, works on paper and more in our Public Art Collection created by Australian artists, many of which are on permanent display in our foyer spaces.

Public Art Collection (PAC)

Arts Centre Melbourne holds one of the most significant public collections of Australian art outside the major state galleries.

The foundation of the [Public Art Collection](#) dates to the construction of the buildings in the 1970s and early 1980s. As Arts Centre Melbourne was being planned and built, specially commissioned works of art were integrally incorporated into the original foyers of Hamer Hall and the Theatres Building, designed by Melbourne-born, award-winning stage designer, John Truscott.

The Public Art Collection includes this significant, foundational major series of works by renowned twentieth-century Australian artists, such as Arthur Boyd, Roger Kemp, Donald Laycock, Sidney Nolan, John Olsen and Jeffrey Smart, along with a ground-breaking selection of early Western Desert paintings and tapestries by important First Nations artists.

This Collection continues to grow, reflecting the ways in which artists are inspired by the collaboration and immutable connection between the visual and performing arts.



Jeffrey Smart, *Container Train in Landscape*, 1983-1984
Commissioned in 1983. Gift of Eva and Marc Besen.
Art Collection, Public Art Collection, Arts Centre Melbourne.

Noel Tunks, *Gloria Swanson's Last Silent Movie*, 1975
Gift of Franziska and Leon Kushinsky in 1983
Art Collection, Public Art Collection, Arts Centre Melbourne.

Australian Performing Arts Collection (APAC)

Arts Centre Melbourne is the proud custodian of the [Australian Performing Arts Collection \(APAC\)](#), which is dedicated to the collection, preservation and interpretation of Australia's circus, dance, music, opera and theatre heritage.

Collecting began in the late 1970s and two early major acquisitions were the J. C. Williamson Theatre Archive and the Dame Nellie Melba Collection.

Today, the collection holds over 850,000 objects, including major acquisitions from Kylie Minogue, Nick Cave, Barry Humphries, Bell Shakespeare, and The Australian Ballet.

Drawing on the significant collection holdings of APAC, we tell the stories of performance and performers through the extraordinary items that have shaped lives and organisations, from concept designs to costumes, from personal and production archives to photography.

In addition to exhibitions, displays and a searchable online catalogue, access to the Australian Performing Arts Collection is enabled through loans to other institutions and via Arts Centre Melbourne's dedicated Research Centre.



APAC's Celebrating Circus display in Smorgan Family Plaza, Arts Centre Melbourne, 2019.

Australian Music Vault (AMV)

[The Australian Music Vault](#) (AMV) is a celebration of the Australian contemporary music story – past, present, and future. It's a place to explore your love of music, revisit some of the big music moments of your life and discover exciting new stories from today's Australian music scene.

The Australian Music Vault brings these stories to life with a free, permanent exhibition in the heart of Melbourne's Arts Precinct. Created by Arts Centre Melbourne in collaboration with the Australian music industry, the Vault features iconic items from Arts Centre Melbourne's Australian Performing Arts Collection alongside items

contributed by some of Australia's most loved and respected artists. With many layers of content supported by interactive and immersive digital experiences, this dynamic exhibition offers visitors a glimpse into the world of the artists, producers, managers, record labels, promoters, roadies, and technicians who have helped put Australian music on the map and allowed it to become the soundtrack to our lives.



Australian Music Vault
exhibition, Arts Centre
Melbourne.

Collections & Exhibitions Team

Arts Centre Melbourne has a team of professionals with specialised roles that curate, manage, conserve, and create exhibitions with our collections.

The Collections and Exhibitions team work within four guiding pillars:

Develop

Curators work in this pillar to develop, grow, elucidate and interpret the collection. They partner and work with the performing arts sector to represent them and their stories through the creation of exhibitions, articles, publications and other research-based activities.

Manage

Registrars work within this pillar to document, store, track, and risk manage the collections physically and through our EMu database.

Preserve

Conservators work within this pillar to protect, care, treat and ensure the access of the collections for current and future generations.

Share

Our project managers and exhibition and research staff work within this pillar to make the collections accessible through physical and online means including the delivery of exhibitions, digital technologies, and research service outcomes.

The Collections and Exhibitions team also works with many other teams at Arts Centre Melbourne to install exhibitions, market exhibitions, connect exhibition themes to programs and shows, and create learning programs and resources.

To provide background context about the development of exhibitions we have provided some information about how the collections are developed, managed, preserved, and shared.

Develop

Developing the Collections

Arts Centre Melbourne began developing its collections in the 1970s. The process of bringing new objects into a collection is called acquisition and our curatorial team works directly with artists, companies, venues, and creatives across the performing and visual arts to develop the collections.

With the Australian Performing Arts Collection (APAC), there are also key artists who have worked, or continue to work, with our curatorial team to collaboratively tell the story of their careers. Kylie Minogue and Nick Cave are examples of artists who work closely with our team. They collaborate with our curators to decide which objects they would like to be acquired, preserved, and shared with the public. Working with artists to tell their own stories is crucial to how we develop APAC. These could be objects that have great meaning to the artist, or signify an important moment in their career, or had great social impact, for example. It can take years of conversations with artists collate these stories and paint a picture of their creative process through material that represents their career and their creative process. Artists will gift or loan their objects to APAC.

The acquisition of objects can happen in several different ways. Sometimes it is through those long-term relationships with artists, sometimes they may be one-off donations from individuals. We also work closely with other arts organisations to help them share their stories and provide a full view of performing arts in Australia. A great example of this is our relationship with The Australian Ballet, who donated a large archive of costumes, sets, designs, and a lot more to Arts Centre Melbourne in 1998.

We now continue to work with them to keep their representation in the Collection current.

When we acquire an object, our curators will speak to the donating artist or company about the item. The kinds of questions they often ask, or consider, are:

- What is the significance of the item to the artist? For example, does it represent the most iconic role they played, a highlight of their career?
- What is the significance of the item to the public? For example, does it mark a particular moment in political, social or cultural terms?
- What is the historical significance of the item?
- What is the aesthetic significance of the item? For example, is it a particularly unique design, does it incorporate different technologies? Are there certain unique elements that enhance the storytelling of the item, for example stage make-up on the collar of a costume.

Arts Centre Melbourne's APAC is unique in that many of the objects we acquire tell the story of a performance, rather than being the artwork itself. Of course, many objects can simultaneously be works of art – they are beautifully crafted objects, images, and costumes – while also being part of a bigger picture. Arts Centre Melbourne's Curators and other team members use APAC to tell the story of how performances develop, and ultimately come to life on the stage through our online stories and physical exhibitions and displays.

Manage

Database Management & Digital Assets

When it comes to managing our collections, our registrars are responsible for this important activity. They use EMu, a collections management software platform used widely in museums and galleries worldwide. Through EMu, we can keep track of every one of more than 850,000 objects in the collections, making sure we know what we have, and where to find them. This is very important when we move collection objects from any of our 3 storage facilities into a display or exhibition.

Every item in the collection is tagged with two barcodes, which can be scanned with a barcode reader. One barcode links to information about the item, and the other tells us where the item is located.

Each item's EMu record includes information such as:

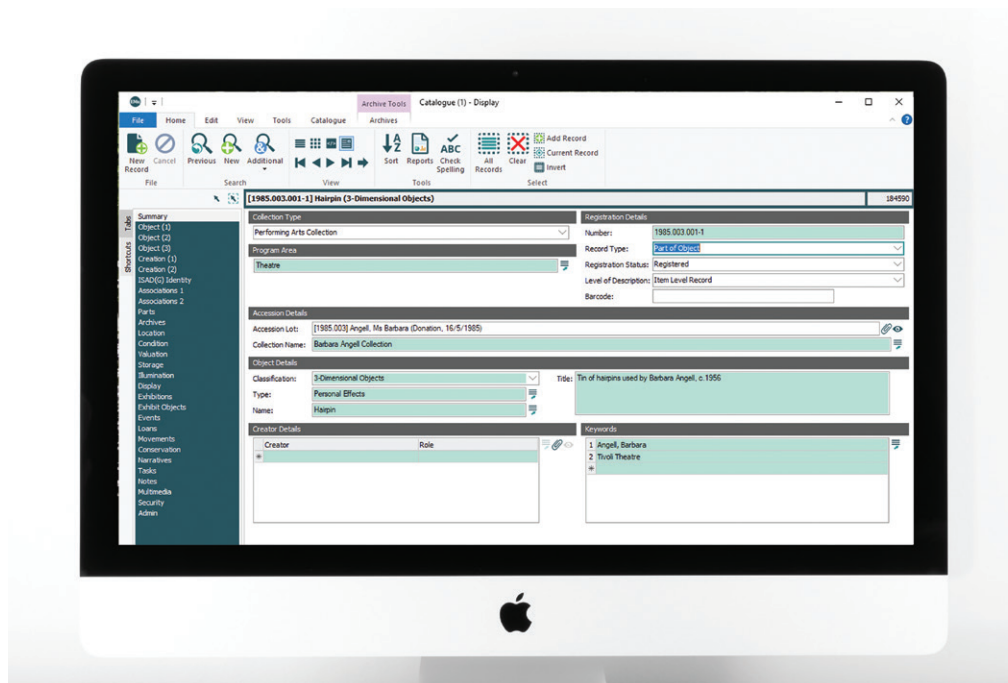
- Who made the object?
- How Arts Centre Melbourne acquired the object
- History of which exhibitions and displays the object has been included in
- Descriptions of the physical aspects of the object including measurements and materials
- Copyright status of the object/item and licensing information
- Location of the object
- Photographs of the object
- Special display requirements, for example a costume needing to be displayed on a specific mannequin.

Manage

The below image shows a costume held in the collection being photographed as part of the documentation workflow. Digitised images provide a visual record of how the object is used, what it is worn with and its physical condition.

Arts Centre Melbourne is constantly updating digital records that relate to the collections. Many objects in the collections come with physical paper documentation and associated content like articles, or original material like a list of props for a particular show. Our team scan these and link them to relevant object records in EMu as this helps support research into specific objects, and associated activities and individuals, and perhaps ultimately use them in an exhibition or display.

The below image illustrates basic summary information about each object as presented by the database. Each object has an individual number that holds all documented information – such as the physical location, materials used in construction as well as donor information and context.



EMu record for an object
– Collections Asset
Management Database.



Image of Registrars
documenting a costume.

Storage Management

When an item is not on display or on loan, it is held in one of three storage facilities:

- Onsite at Arts Centre Melbourne's Hamer Hall storage facility
- Laverton Store
- Public Records Office of Victoria (PROV)

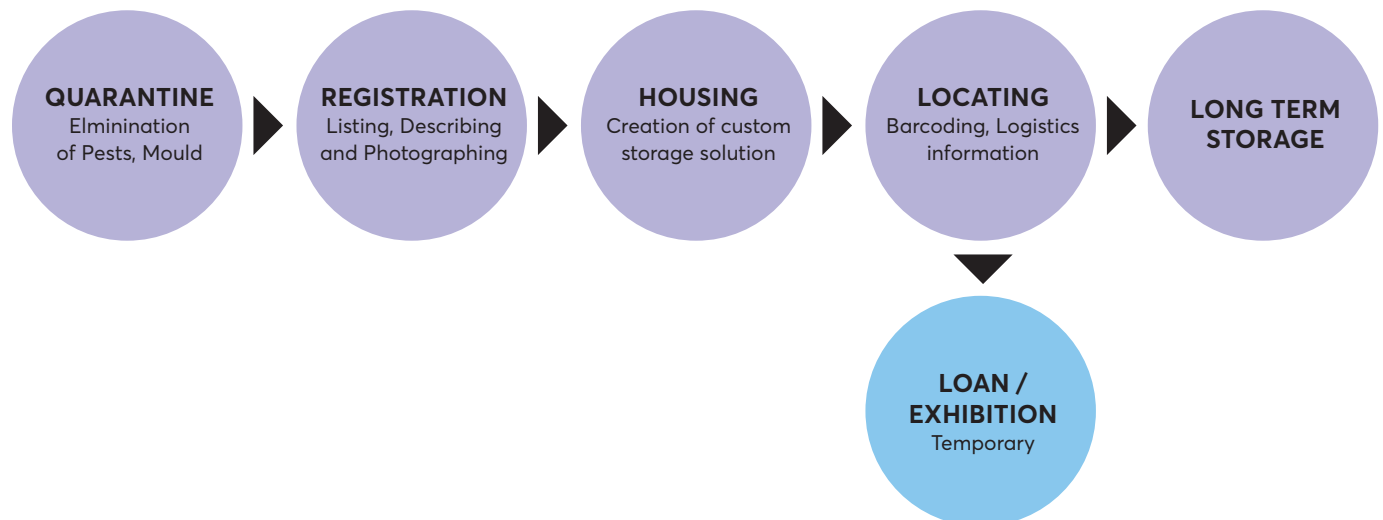
All facilities must adhere to strict protocols that protect the collection from damage. All facilities are required to be:

- Pest and pollutant free – with regular pest management and HEPA air filtration in place
- Temperature and humidity stable – usually between 15-25 degrees and 40-60% humidity

An ongoing challenge with managing the collections is ensuring that we have adequate space to store it. Arts Centre Melbourne has recently undertaken a significant upgrade our Hamer Hall storage facility which offers more space for APAC to be stored in.

All objects stored across our facilities must be appropriately packed and wrapped to mitigate any degradation from light or long-term reaction to other materials. All packing material used is inert and rated to archival standards.

As an object comes into the collection it goes through a rigorous process from initial acquisition to long term preservation storage as demonstrated in the chart below.



Preserve

Remedial & Preventative Conservation

Our new storage research and education facility at Hamer Hall includes a state-of-the-art conservation lab. Conservation is the art and science of preserving and restoring objects that have degraded or suffered damage over time. Conservators understand the chemical makeup of a range of different materials, as well as the ways they might degrade, and how to preserve and conserve them. As collection objects are made from a vast array of materials, conservators choose a specialty area during their training. These include paintings, objects, textiles, paper and photographs.

Conservators focus on one object at a time, assessing the item's unique condition, identifying the materials the item is made of, and thinking about the ways to prolong the item's life and condition. They will document the details of the item in a condition report, including its materials, methods of construction and areas of degradation, weakness, or damage.

Conservators can make recommendations on the best course of action for an item following its assessment, from stabilisation to restoration, and can then undertake the work themselves or consult with external specialists.



Entrance to our Hamer Hall storage facility.



Internal street and display area in our Hamer Hall storage facility.

Preserve

To help identify materials used in an item, conservators will examine objects under magnification and test each material's chemical makeup before taking any action to repair. Before undertaking conservation treatments, a treatment proposal is developed. This is a plan that often incorporates a testing phase to ensure that the materials used in the treatment will not adversely affect the object.

The Collections and Exhibitions team also work closely and advise within ACM and with associated presenters to understand and mitigate any potential risks to the objects while on display, especially if there is food and drink planned for the area.

Whenever an object is put on display or being prepared to travel (for a loan or tour), a risk assessment is completed. Here you can see a screen shot of our risk assessment which covers off against the [10 agents of deterioration](#).

Art Collection
Victorian Arts Centre Trust ABN 83 285 983 059

Condition Report

Number: 1998.023.0875

Title: Tutu skirt worn by Justine Summers in *Divergence*, The Australian Ballet, 1998

Date: c 1994

Dimensions: H x W x D [mm] Waist 560

Credit Line: Gift of The Australian Ballet, 1998

Creator: Leyonjelm, Vanessa
CONWAY, Damien - The Australian Ballet Production Division

Condition Specifications

Inspection: (Primary) (Secondary) (Tertiary)

Media Category:

Technique:

Support:

Condition Status: Good/Needs no action

Condition Date: 8-Jun-2023

Condition Checked By: Cosgrove, Bronwyn - Arts Centre Melbourne

Condition Details: Stable. Rounded double pleats are securely fastened at internal and exterior edges with minimal deformation. Orange fabric binding intact, with ingrained soiling. Stitching at elasticised waistband broken and loose due to use. Integrated braids are intact but appear stretched, possibly due to degradation of elastomeric content. Black mesh exterior of braids is intact with no pulled threads or holes. Elastic braid at leg openings still retain some elasticity but is deformed and frayed. White accretions on upper surface at PR and PL of waist. White accretions on underside at front and rear quarter. Scattered pale brown glue-like accretions on underside.

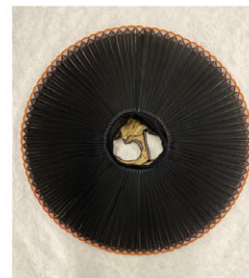
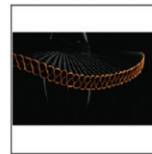
Handling Instructions:

Display Instructions:

Temperature: Temperature: 15-24°C, with no more than a 4°C fluctuation within any 24 hour period

Relative Humidity: Relative Humidity: 45-55%, with no more than a 5% fluctuation within any 24 hour period

Light Levels: Light Levels: < 50 lux, < 75 microWatts/Lumen



Tutu - upper



Tutu - underside



Tutu - waist

Risk Assessment Template

Collection Objects Risk Assessment - Template

Object: 1998.023.0875

Proposed by: [Name]

Date: 20 September 2022

Description of Display/Storage	Risk	Control Measure Details	Control Measure Details	Control Measure Details	Control Measure Details	Control Measure Details	Control Measure Details	Control Measure Details	Control Measure Details	Control Measure Details
1998.023.0875	1998.023.0875	1998.023.0875	1998.023.0875	1998.023.0875	1998.023.0875	1998.023.0875	1998.023.0875	1998.023.0875	1998.023.0875	1998.023.0875

An example of a condition report with detail images.

Risk Assessment Template, Australian Music Vault Object Changeover, 2022.

Share

Exhibitions & Displays

Arts Centre Melbourne has a responsibility to the State of Victoria to share the collections so that the people of Victoria (and beyond) can learn about the history of the performing arts and have access to these objects and artworks.

Arts Centre Melbourne is a working theatre, rather than a dedicated art gallery or museum, so it can be difficult to share the collections as much as we'd like to! Displays change over regularly, with different objects and artworks being given time in the public eye.

Arts Centre Melbourne presents a year-round program of exhibitions and displays that showcase the breadth and depth of the Australian Performing Arts Collection, and its main collecting areas of circus, dance, music, opera and theatre. Our Collections and Exhibitions team curate and produce fascinating stories from Australia's rich and varied performing arts history. At times, they are themed to complement productions being staged in Arts Centre Melbourne's venues.

We produce:

- Online exhibitions - which use objects to provide a snapshot into the lives of significant performers, both the household names and the under-recognised. Examples include [Rites: Dancing towards a shared history](#) and [From Kylie With Love](#)
- Live exhibitions and displays - significant costumes, props, photographs, and archives from the Australian Performing Arts Collection are regularly on display for the public - either on site at Arts Centre Melbourne's venues or on loan to other museums and galleries.

Loans & Touring Exhibitions

Arts Centre Melbourne produces exhibitions that go on tour to other galleries or performing arts centres. Some items are sent out on loan for extended periods of time.

Stranger than Kindness: The Nick Cave Exhibition at The Black Diamond in Copenhagen is an example of a recent loan which has turned into a touring exhibition. Read about sending an exhibition overseas here: [Travelling with Nick Cave's Portfolio](#)

Developing & Delivering an Exhibition

The workflow diagram on the following page outlines how the Collections and Exhibitions team work together to develop an exhibition.

The process includes the following steps:

Curator's role:

- Create exhibition concept and undertake research, often consulting with performing arts industry.
- Develop the narrative and underpinning themes that will be explored
- Select objects and create object lists
- Write text for display labels, wall panels and marketing collateral, and any associated publications and articles.
- Assist with the design of the exhibition
- Talk to audiences about the exhibition, including the public and the media.

Registrar's role:

- Perform risk assessment
- Manage all exhibition documentation such as light levels and display location
- Transport and retrieval of objects
- Documentation of objects – materials, mannequin needs, costume parts and photography.

Conservators' role:

- Assess and condition report objects
- Complete treatments to stabilise objects
- Recommend display materials and methods
- Specify object supports and make mounts.
- Mount and install objects
- Work with lighting staff to set light levels

Project Manager's role:

- Engage internal team and determine project goals and methods
- Create exhibition schedule
- Engage designer and other external contractors
- Manage meetings and communications internal and external
- Manage and track budget

Loans coordinator's role:

- Secure loans and negotiate loan agreements
- Organise loan transportation and handling
- Manage insurance for loan objects

Developing & Delivering an Exhibition

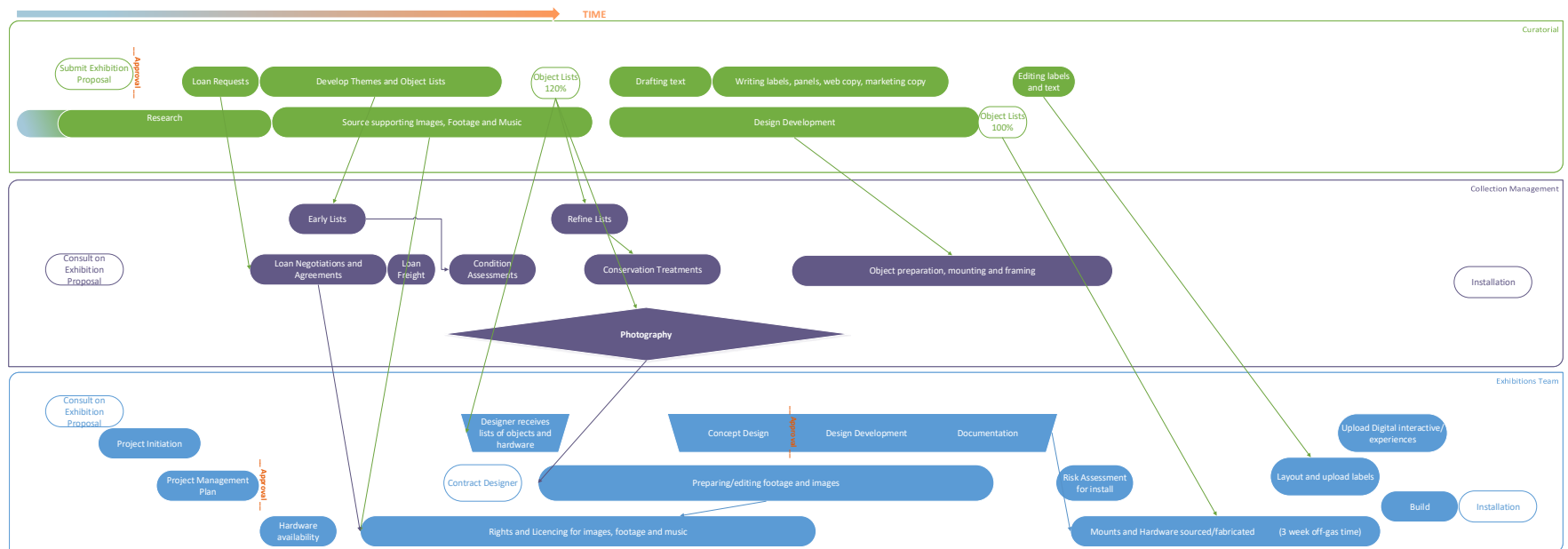
Rights & Licensing Advisor's role:

- Assess copyright status of all objects and/or external assets required for the exhibition
- Work with Curators and project teams to advise on licensing requirements for different sets of rights and media required (e.g. exhibition, online, social media, print)
- Negotiate permissions and fees with copyright owners (e.g. visual artists, photographers, filmmakers, music publishers and record labels, agencies, costume and set designers)

- Coordination and drafting of licence agreements, budget management and monitoring of licence expiry for all agreements
- Identify and manage legal and potential reputational risks, via copyright risk assessments and developing mitigation plans

Display Coordinator's role:

- Manage and maintain exhibition hardware.
- Mount and frame 2D objects.
- Assist with exhibition installation.
- Lighting



Workflows for Exhibition Development.

Case Study: Developing an Exhibition – Australian Music Vault

Launched in 2017 at Arts Centre Melbourne, the Australian Music Vault (AMV), incorporating the ARIA Hall of Fame, is a collaboration with Australia's contemporary music industry celebrating and honouring Australian music history.

The free exhibition is responsive to the community. Rather than telling the stories of Australian music chronologically, the exhibition is thematic and explores the following permanent themes:

The Real Thing

Explores the Australian sound and the contribution of hitmakers and heroes.

Two Way Traffic

Highlights the impact of internationally touring Australian artists on the industry back home.

The Wild Ones

Features innovation and improvisation in the Australian music industry from handmade instruments, recording equipment, indie labels, and unlikely fame.

Agents of Change

Explores the role music plays in responding to and affecting change in society.

The exhibition also includes a display case for temporary displays which encourages curators to develop new themes and ideas linking to the broader theme of **Identity and Belonging**. Previous display explored Punk / New Wave, Hip Hop, Melbourne Electronic Sound Studio (MESS), and most recently Strength in Sound: the role of communities in Australian music culture.

These themes allow visitors to discover unexpected connections across time periods, genres, and artists, and highlights a range of material on loan from members of the music industry, alongside items from the the Australian Performing Arts Collection.

The exhibition program incorporates anniversaries, awards, and industry milestones. The Australian Music Vault is a flexible space, responding to trends and important moments in history. The team is an integral part of the broader Collections and Exhibitions team, and collaborates both internally and with external contractors to develop the curatorial vision and install displays.

Case Study: Developing an Exhibition – Australian Music Vault

Stakeholder and relationship management is a significant aspect of exhibition development. The Australian Music Vault team collaborate across the sector, from artists such as Mo 'Ju and Midnight Oil, to people that work in community organisations like PBSFM to produce displays, online stories, and public programming.

The team work with artists, avid collectors, management and record labels, venues, and organisations to display a range of items including artefacts, memorabilia, instruments, and costumes through loans alongside objects from the the Australian Performing Arts Collection. The exhibition aims to tell the stories of the amazing contributors to the music industry, from those on-stage to behind-the-scenes such as roadies, photographers, and radio DJs, who have all helped put Australian music on the international stage.

In addition to physical objects, the Australian Music Vault features a high degree of integrated and immersive digital content. This is through digital labels, 'Engagement Zones' showing exclusive content, and the Amplifier: an immersive digital experience featuring 360-degree digital stories focusing on distinct moments in music history, such as Sunbury Festival (1972-1975) and Melbourne's SLAM rally (2010).

A key part of exhibition development involves copyright management. This involves working across a broad network of musicians, artists, filmmakers, photographers, music publishers, record labels, artist managers to negotiate permissions to use a variety of copyright protected materials including music, recordings, photography, audio-visual material that help tell the stories of Australian music.



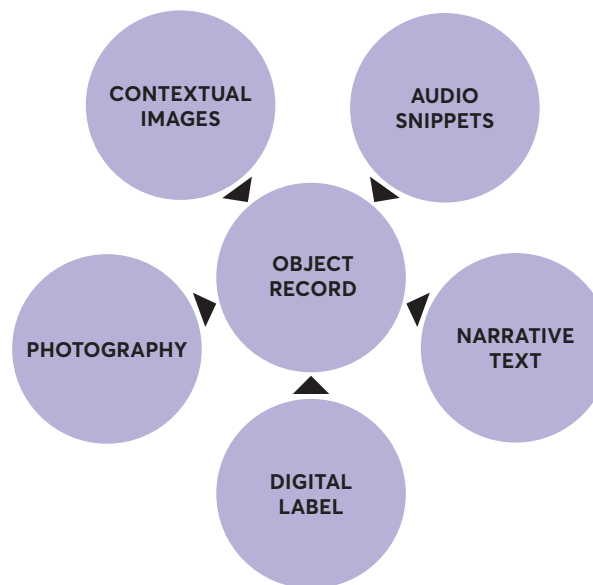
Australian Music Vault display
Strength in Sound. Photograph
by Jacinta Keefe.

Case Study: Using EMu to Create Digital Labels

When it comes to exhibitions and displays the registrars use EMu and other digital assets for text labels including the digital labels in the Australian Music Vault.

All objects that are included in the exhibition need to be photographed, described and an accessible caption developed. The digital assets created through this process become the basis for the digital labels. Each digital label contains more contextual information about the object that the viewer can dive into, such as audio snippets and photographs from performance.

This information is stored within the collections management database EMu, and fed to the digital displays through an API connection, and is managed by the Registration team.



The process to create a digital label encompasses all members of the Collections and Exhibitions team: - Curators direct how the object will look, the Conservators dress and stabilise the object on a mannequin and lastly the photographer plans the lighting and completes the final image editing. Once the image asset is ready for use it is ingested into EMu and linked to the record for the physical object.

The Curatorial team will then create the object label text and select contextual material to go with the imagery. The text that sits within the digital label is known as the Narrative and is again linked to the initial object record.

Once all material has been collated, it will then go for Rights assessment. All images, quotes, audio and video material can only be used if the correct permissions are sought and obtained. Again this is stored in EMu against each of the associated objects.



Layout mock-up of a digital label,
Australian Music Vault.

Case Study: Conservation - Exhibition Preparation



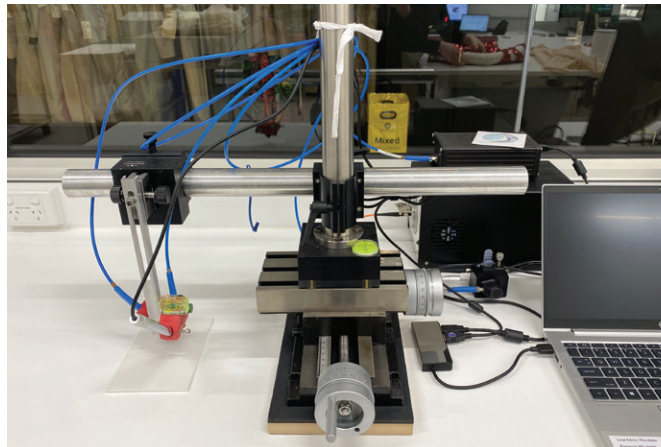
AMV display,
Art Centre Melbourne,
2018.

Case Study: Conservation - Exhibition Preparation

Alongside preservation and treatment programs, Conservators participate in exhibition planning and installation. They will take part in exhibition design development to ensure protection of objects on display. this includes providing advice on suitable build materials to limit object-damaging acidic vapours that are emitted by some woods, adhesives, and paints. For objects on open display (not enclosed in showcases), conservators work with designers to ensure that plinth sizes are planned so that the objects are out of reach. Light, especially UV light can cause irreversible damage to objects.

Light levels in exhibition spaces, especially those where paper and textile objects are on display are low for this reason. Microfading is an analytical technique that allows conservators to gather scientific data on the light sensitivity of dyes and pigments in objects. By exposing an area less 1mm in diameter to intense light and collecting data on the rate of colour change or fading in that area, conservators can advise on appropriate light exposures and display periods.

It is common for objects to require display mounts for display. These might be in the form of metal stands, frames, or mannequins. Conservators work alongside curators, designers, and fabricators to ensure that objects are well supported on display, and if possible, viewed as they would have been originally used or worn.



ACM Microfader.



Conservator mounting a costume.

Case Study: Exhibition - Kylie on Stage

The concept for an exhibition or display can arise in a few different ways. Sometimes, a major donation will come in, for example a set of costume designs from The Australian Ballet, and our Collections and Exhibitions team might work on bringing that exciting new acquisition to the public in a way that speaks to the history of the company.

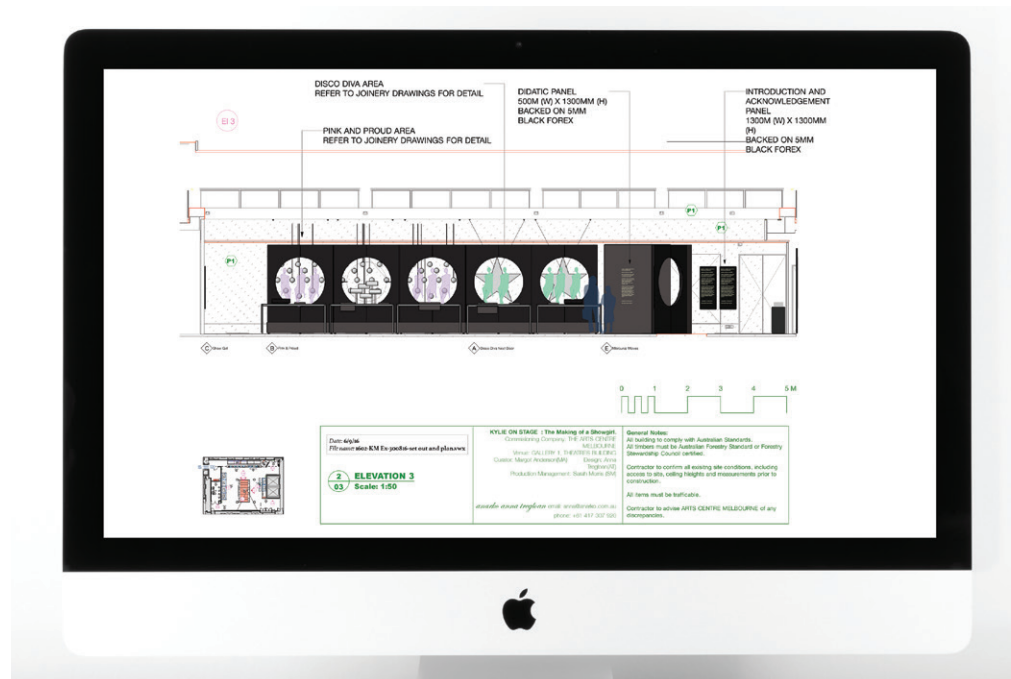
Alternatively, a theme might emerge from a moment in society. Or we may want to mark a significant anniversary of the founding of a performing arts company or of a landmark

performance. At other times relationships we have developed with performers and companies lead naturally to an idea for an exhibition to explore their work or career.

Once we have decided on an exhibition concept, the curatorial team will research potential material from the collection and identify possible external loans.

As they do this, they will identify an overall narrative for the exhibition, and themes that can be used to break down the exhibition into sections. For example, the exhibition might be arranged chronologically according to the different phases of an artist's career, or according to ideas or themes that have inspired them throughout their career.

To examine the exhibition development process we'll use the touring exhibition *Kylie on Stage* as a case study.



Exhibition design drawings
for *Kylie on Stage*.



Exhibition design drawings
for *Kylie on Stage*.

Case Study: Exhibition - Kylie on Stage

Kylie on Stage featured costumes along with a selection of designs, working drawings, photographs and footage that explore the creative process behind each costume and provide rare glimpses into the world backstage.

For *Kylie on Stage* the curatorial concept used specific themes to reflect the development of Kylie's stage persona throughout her career. The five themes of the exhibition were:

- Disco Diva Next Door
- Pink and Proud
- Postmodern Pop Princess
- Showgirl
- Mercurial Moves

Once the curators have an initial list of objects grouped into themes, we work with an exhibition designer to find ways to lay out the exhibition in the space available. A design brief will lay out the exhibition themes and content, as well as suggesting the atmosphere or feeling we would like to create in the space. In tandem with this, our Conservators assess the condition of the selected objects particularly in relation to their robustness for display. Some objects may require treatment or repair before they can be safely mounted and displayed.



Customised packing for *Kylie on Stage* exhibition objects to protect them in transit.

Case Study: Exhibition - Kylie on Stage

During the development of the *Kylie on Stage* touring exhibition, the Conservators determined that some boots and gloves could be damaged by being put onto and taken off their mannequins numerous times. The solution was to customise the mannequins to cause least wear, and also to leave some objects on their mannequins for the whole tour. For touring exhibitions, Conservators create detailed condition reports for each object.

Once the design of all exhibition hardware, 'set pieces', signage, graphics, plinths, frames and mounts (such as book cradles or mannequins) is confirmed, these are fabricated off site by specialist contractors. Supporting audiovisual materials are often also created with guidance from Curators. Each object, design, photo, video or music element has to be cleared by the creator or copyright holder.

When the exhibition is touring, a lengthy process is undertaken to pack each object into boxes and crates. Collection objects already have identifying numbers, and now each box, crate, mount and hardware piece is also numbered for ease of installation at each touring venue.

Curators research and write the wall text, object labels and refine the media release along with other promotional texts. They also may be interviewed for print, TV or radio about the exhibition and deliver public programs such as floor talks.



Customised packing for *Kylie on Stage* exhibition objects to protect them in transit.

Case Study: Exhibition - Kylie on Stage

Installation of an exhibition often involves Registrars, Conservators, Designer, Curators, Technicians and a Project Manager - each contributing their specific expertise. The installation period is carefully planned to completely minimise the risk of damage to the collection, so often involves a 'build' phase for hardware work followed by an 'objects' phase.

A dedicated Project Manager oversaw the development, preparation, installation and touring of *Kylie on Stage*, managing the multiple workflows, processes and budgets. Also managing the liaison with other internal or external partners, which may include marketing and social media teams, freight companies, designers, printers, fabricators, venue managers and funding bodies.

At the conclusion of a tour such as *Kylie on Stage* there is a phase for each object to be unpacked and condition checked, have all the relevant information entered into EMu for future reference, and be returned to its storage location or lender. Boxes, crates and other hardware may need to be re-purposed or disposed. Outcomes and statistics of the tour are reported back to the funding bodies.

KylieFever2002 tour, Act Six, 'Cybertronica'

Painted leather ankle boots, fluorescent leather studded belt and customised bangles

Designed by Dolce & Gabbana [Italy]

*Gift of Kylie Minogue, 2009
Arts Centre Melbourne, Australian Performing Arts Collection*

Costume design for Act Six, 'Cybertronica'

Designed by Dolce & Gabbana [Italy]

"Cybertronica and the encore 'Can't Get You Out of My Head' featured Dolce & Gabbana's take on the cargo pants, low slung, revealing a G-string. The pants were prominent in the runway show in Milan that Kylie and I attended featuring a collection based very much on Sicilian 'pastoral' chic. Workwear as glamour. The juxtaposition of the masculine and the feminine."
William Baker, 2002

Reproduced courtesy of Dolce & Gabbana

Wall label for
Kylie on Stage
exhibition, 2016.

Useful Links



[Australian Performing Arts Collection](#)

[Revealing Hidden Treasure](#)

[Behind the Scenes with the Dame Joan Sutherland Collection](#)

[Public Art Collection](#)

[The Preservation of the Public Art Collection at Arts Centre Melbourne](#)

[Loans](#)

[Research and Access](#)

[Frank Van Straten Fellowship](#)

[Preserve](#)

Curriculum Links

UNIT 2	UNIT 3	UNIT 4
Understand, Develop and Resolve Area of Study 1, Outcome 1	Collect, Extend and Connect Area of Study 3, Outcome 3	Consolidate, present and conserve Area of Study 3, Outcome 3
KEY KNOWLEDGE	KEY KNOWLEDGE	KEY KNOWLEDGE
- background information about artists and artworks - the ways artworks in an exhibition have been selected for display - the influence of contexts on the representation of subject matter and the communication of meaning in artworks - connections between artworks in a thematic exhibition - strategies used to exhibit artworks from different contexts in a thematic exhibition, including ways to select and form relationships between artworks in the exhibition - processes used to document the design of an exhibition in their Visual Arts journal - use of appropriate art terminology in the presentation and evaluation of artworks	- the characteristics of exhibitions - the characteristics of exhibition spaces - the responsibilities involved in curating an exhibition - methods used for identifying and analysing the curatorial considerations and the thematic connections between the artworks and artists in an exhibition - methods used to develop didactic information about the theme, artists and artworks in an exhibition - the strategies used to plan and develop an exhibition in a specific space - art terminology used to discuss exhibitions, artists and artworks	- methods used and considerations involved in the presentation, conservation and care of artworks while on display in an exhibition space - considerations of conservation and care that relate to artworks in the handling, storage and transportation of artworks - relevant conservation and care methods that students can apply to their own artworks when on display - relevant conservation and care methods that students can apply to their own artworks in storage, handling and transportation - terminology used to discuss the conservation and care of artworks

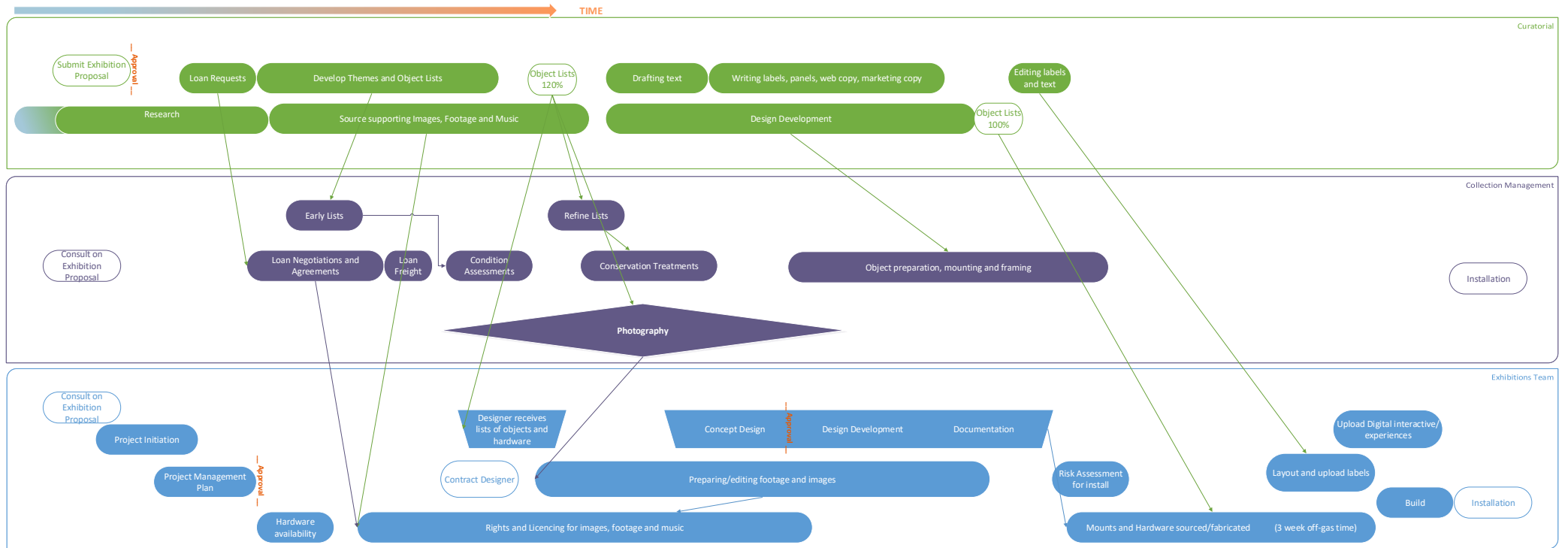
Curriculum Links

KEY SKILLS	KEY SKILLS	KEY SKILLS
• use a range of resources to investigate information about artists and artworks • justify the selection of artworks for a thematic exhibition • identify and analyse the influence of contexts on the representation of subject matter and ideas to communicate meaning in artworks • explain the connections between artworks in a thematic exhibition • discuss the ways in which artworks from different contexts are exhibited in a thematic exhibition • research and select artworks to design a thematic exhibition • explore a thematic exhibition and then design a thematic exhibition for an audience • develop and present information about a range of artworks in a thematic exhibition • document the research and design of a thematic exhibition in their Visual Arts journal • use appropriate art terminology in the evaluation and presentation of artworks	• research and discuss the characteristics of exhibitions • research and discuss the characteristics of exhibition spaces • research and discuss the responsibilities involved in curating an exhibition • discuss and analyse the curatorial considerations and the thematic connections between the artworks of artists in an exhibition • develop an exhibition proposal for a specific space using the works of the three selected artists from Unit 3 Area of Study 1 • explain and analyse the presentation of artworks in the exhibition and the thematic connections between them • present and discuss didactic information including the theme of the exhibition, and the artists and artworks • discuss the characteristics of exhibitions, exhibition spaces, artists and artworks using art terminology	• investigate, identify and evaluate the methods used and considerations involved in the presentation, conservation and care of artworks while on display in an exhibition space • investigate, identify and evaluate conservation and care in the handling, storage and transportation of artworks • discuss the relevant conservation and care methods that can apply to their own artworks when on display compared to artworks studied in exhibitions visited in the current year of study • discuss the relevant conservation and care methods that can apply to their own artworks in storage, handling and transportation compared to artworks studied in exhibitions visited in the current year of study • apply terminology in the discussion of the conservation and care of artworks

Thank you

**Collections and Exhibitions Team
and Creative Learning Team
at Arts Centre Melbourne**





Workflows for Exhibition Development.