FOLDING THE EXHIBITION

1. Documenting and archiving exhibitions

2. Recommended practices for archiving documentation of exhibitions

Edited by the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA)

MeLa*

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RF04 Curatorial and Artistic Research
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MUSEU D'ART CONTEMPORANI DE BARCELONA

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Coordination and editing
Publications Department and MACBA Study Center

Texts
Maite Muñoz
Marta Vega
Núria Gallissà

Translations
Rebecca Close

Editing
Keith Patrick

Graphic design and layout
Hey Studio

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Acknowledgments

This book grew out of the work of the Research Field 04 'Curatorial and Artistic Research. Task 4.2' leaded by The Royal College of Art / RCA (London, UK) within the European project MeLa* – European Museums in an Age of Migrations. MeLa is a four-year interdisciplinary research project funded in 2011 by the European Commission under the Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities Programme (Seventh Framework Programme). Adopting the notion of 'migration' as a paradigm of the contemporary global and multicultural world, MeLa reflects on the role of museums and heritage in the twenty-first century. The main objective of the MeLa project is to define innovative museum practices that reflect the challenges of the contemporary processes of globalisation, mobility and migration. As people, objects, knowledge and information move at increasingly high rates, a sharper awareness of an inclusive European identity is needed to facilitate mutual understanding and social cohesion. MeLa aims at empowering museums spaces, practices and policies with the task of building this identity. MeLa involves nine European partners – universities, museums, research institutes and a company – who will lead six Research Fields (RF) with a collaborative approach.

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Documenting:
The Origin of History

More than a decade ago, museums, critics and historians agreed that in order to write the history of modern and contemporary art today it is no longer enough to study the actual artworks. Around the beginning of the twentieth century, the work of art began to incorporate the space of the exhibition and transformed it into an instrument of its perceptive condition. The history of art is the history of exhibitions and a large part of this history (or these histories) begins with the conditions in which these artworks were seen, where they were placed in the space of perception as well as their publics. Having been linked for centuries to political, religious and economic power, modern art obeyed the intentions of the artist. From the middle of the twentieth century onwards, the art institution, the museum and the galleries – as well as independent, alternative spaces – took prominence as the stage for the production and presentation of art. With the appearance of new kinds of artistic genres, exhibiting and producing became synonyms. The notion of the exhibition exploded into a million pieces with the naturalisation of ephemeral artistic mediums that took time as one of their basic components: time became a material and no longer merely one of the conditions of perceiving an artwork. Every exhibition is an ephemeral entity that should 'make history' through its traces – through the visual and oral memory that it leaves behind in its documentation.

Museums of contemporary art host and preserve different kinds of contemporary artistic heritage. On one hand, collections contain works of art, as well as numerous documents that may later gain the status of artwork. This is the case with photographic, video or cinematographic works that 'document' performance and actions or events that will never be repeated: thus the documentation becomes the work itself. On the other hand, adjacent to collections we normally find libraries and archives that preserve publications, which in turn either document and analyse exhibitions, form part of the exhibitions or even act as a substitute for the exhibition. Books and magazines have traditionally been authentic quarries from which historians have extracted materials for developing their narratives. And museums today tend to invest increasingly more careful attention in documenting their own activities, exhibitions and initiatives.

As part of the set of reflections marked by the MeLa project, this publication presents a preliminary analysis and theoretical reflection surrounding methods and systems of documenting exhibitions and other activities in the field – always open and plural – of the art practices of our time. The perfecting of archival tools and instruments has resulted in a significant increase in the uses of contemporary artistic heritage. This in turn situates art at the centre of today's culture and makes the processes of its historicising richer and more complex.

Bartomeu Marí
Director of the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA)

1.

Documenting and archiving exhibitions

The MACBA Study Center – in the context of Research Field 04 `Curatorial and Artistic Research' of the MeLa Project[1] – has carried out research into the protocols of archiving and the methods of classifying documentation produced by exhibitions in the field of contemporary art, as well as investigating how these practices impact upon the writing of art history.

The main aim of the research project is the identification of these and the production of a proposal of recommendations for putting in motion and managing archives of exhibitions.

As well as these recommendations, which are of an imminently practical character, a bibliography relating to documenting and historicising exhibitions of contemporary art has been compiled. This bibliography, which can be found in the following http://www.mela-project.eu/upl/cms/attach/20130613/170804387_7366.pdf, allows for a vision of the history of exhibitions leading from the 1960s to the present.

With the current publication, the conclusions sought by this investigation link museums, galleries, libraries, researchers, artists and more.

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1 **MeLa*** – European Museums in an Age of Migrations is a project financed by the European Unions's Seventh Framework Programme and integrated and implemented by academic and museum institutions in five European countries www.mela-project.eu

1.1.

The notion of archiving and documenting

The archive as an entity that above all manages documentation, produced throughout the duration of an activity of a person or entity, conducts tasks that are fundamentally technical: describing, classifying, conserving, attending to researchers and various other actions related to administrating, coordinating, preserving and giving access to documents. However, it is evident that when one is working with historically valuable archives of documentation, the object being dealt with is a witness to events – it is memory. And this memory can be distorted, or even manipulated, in the process of organising and managing documentation. Eliminating or preventing the consultation of determined documents, classifying them according to markedly subjective readings or committing certain errors in the description of information, while perhaps involuntary, obviously has important consequences that reach much further than questions of technicality. The rigour of the investigation of documents in the archive and the objective pretences of their management must be compatible with a diversity of readings and not limit themselves to the interpretations of the institutions that hold or produce them.

Throughout history, the concept of the archive has not only been dealt with from the point of view of the archivist – of professional management – but it has been studied and theorised within various fields of culture. Giorgio Agamben conceives of the archive as a system of relations between that which is named and that which is not named. These networks of relations, which can be traced through the documents, constitute what is transmitted over time as 'collective memory'. In the construction of this memory, there are documents that are privileged through their conservation in archives, where the fundamentals that sustain historical discourses are produced. It is precisely this that Boris Groys calls the cultural archive. Groys reflects on how everything that is collected and preserved by archives is what ends up being meaningful, relevant and valued by a determined culture. Conversely, everything that has not been found a space in the archive resides outside, in what Groys calls profane space. However, cultural archives change and produce continual transferences between what is inside and what remains outside.

Inevitably, every archive is created and classified in an ideological context. Without an ethical will to express the plurality of ideas that an archive can contain, the documentation is subject to the perversion of the exercising of power and cultural indoctrination. Despite being able to question the objectivity of these archival practices, archives have to aspire to be democratic and to give their users an experience of knowledge of each document that is the most faithful possible to its content and original configuration. Archives are reflections of society, and their uses and processes can say more about society than the documents they contain.

Respecting the document should not only be expressed in the moment in which it is archived, but also in the posterior interpretations of it. In the *Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969) by Michel Foucault, historical documents are treated as the archaeological remains that serve for critically analysing the history of ideas.

Another important point is the appearance and generalisation of digital documentation and the dematerialisation of archival technologies that occurs as a result. From a technical point of view, the digital nature of the documents allows the accessibility and diffusion of archives and bestows upon them ubiquity, at the same time that their immateriality and obsoleteness obstructs their permanence. Beyond technical questions, the digital conditions of the archive suppose a change of paradigm: this is the shift from the archive based in space to the archive based in time, to borrow the terms

of Wolfgang Ernst. This media theorist reflects on how technologies allow for the creation of anarchic and subjective archives – the so called 'anarchives' – in contrast to traditional archival practices.

Art agents use archival documents as a prime material in their work to generate ideas and critical visions, which at the same time produce new documents. The information contained in archives has garnered new forms of visibility in artistic practice, whether this is in discourses that want to impact reality in a direct way or alternatively through the construction of artistic fictions. The exhibited, studied or displayed archive generates new documents (that at the same time come to constitute part of the archive itself), and in that way this process of working with documentation is also a means of enriching the original collection.

In the last few years, the increasing interest that archives have sustained (for their contents as much as their structures) has contributed to the recognition of the importance of these entities. In the same way, theoretic reflection around the concept of the archive has made respectfully managing contents a primary objective of institutional archives as well as making clear the responsibility implied in watching over a document that might serve for the writing of history; in this case, art history.

1.2.

The institutional archive

Traditionally, museums have prioritised the treatment and conservation of personal archives or archives donated by entities as well as the management of the institutional archive itself. The contents of acquired archives undoubtedly stand out for their historical significance in the realm of research, for the way in which they maintain interest in the space of exhibition and for the prestige they endow on the institution that hosts them. It is for these reasons that documentation sourced from outside the museum has been privileged while dealing with the institutions own documentation has been postponed, as this is considered more of an administrative process than a source of heritage with historical interest.

Those who archive determine what becomes a historical event, to the extent that the documentation that arrives in the future is the basis of studying the past. That is why it is important to search for different means of distributing knowledge and contents in the different archives of the agents of contemporary art (artists, galleries, museums, biennials) and to understand how histories can be explained through them.

The archive is the primary source of unequivocal value for understanding the lines of investigation of the artistic institution, for showing the processes of conceptual construction and for reflecting on the intellectual and artistic influences of the society that surrounds their activities. The museum makes use of the archive to the extent that it is conscientious of its importance as a producer of contents – a role that extends beyond simple conservation, patrimony or distribution and mediation of information.

1.3.

The documentation of exhibitions

An important part of the archive of an art institution is the documentation produced around its own exhibitions, despite the fact that traditionally they have received very little attention. The exhibition is not only a selection of objects and actions, but also an entity that synthesises a previous work of study and seeks to offer the public different readings of contemporary art – giving rise to the work's focuses of critical debate.

The documentation generated during processes of conceptualisation, production and activation of exhibitions has a historical value that reaches beyond mere administration. Documents such as the initial plans for the show, the different lists of works or the plans that sketch the relations between the artistic objects and the space, are in their sum knowledge and experimentation. These documents are especially interesting in terms of understanding the theoretical discourses that underlie the institutions that conceive the exhibition.

The archive has to assist in the process of understanding the motivations lying behind the exhibition, its internal workings, the way in which the curators work, and the politics and policies of the institution throughout a determined period of time. As well as conserving the institution's own memory, the archives of an art space are also a resource for documenting the work of the artists exhibited, who do not always havetheir own systems for archiving their documents and materials.

The character of the exhibition – a temporal event – transforms them into experiences that reach a limited number of people. Once the exhibition has finished, parts of their contents can only be accessed through exhibition catalogues, which might include texts that explain the exhibition narratives, or it might be limited to a series of photographs and technical labels of the works. In any case, the publications associated with exhibitions have a limited reach and, without the will to conserve and diffuse them, they can disappear quickly from the circuits of distribution.

This ephemeral condition of the exhibition necessitates the search for forms of rediscovery of exhibitions that with time have become emblematic events, whether for their content or for the innovative designs of the exhibition space. Furthermore, recently the history of curatorial practices and the changing role of the exhibition as a language of communication has been the object of increasing interest, and there are every day more seminars, studies and publications dedicated to the subject.

In 2013 the Fondazione Prada presented *When Attitudes Become Form: Bern 1969/Venice 2013* at the Ca' Corner della Regina in Venice, which was curated by Germano Celant, Thomas Demand and Rem Koolhaas. This was a version of the 1969 exhibition *Live in Your Head. When Attitudes Become Form*, curated by Harald Szeemann at the Bern Kunsthalle. This reconstruction was possible thanks to the accessibility of original sources of information related to the project, the personal archives of Harald Szeemann, the direct interviews with artists, the conservators at the Getty Research Institute (GRI in Los Angeles and the written and photographic sources preserved in the library of the Kunsthalle of Bern.

The work that the Fondazione Prada and the team at the Getty Research Institute completed with labels, posters, photographs and other materials has allowed for the identification of both the works exhibited in 1969 and the method in which they were displayed. Some of these materials – that remain unpublished – were included in a publication that accompanied the exhibition in Venice. Without the vast documentation of the project, conserved until today, it would never have been possible to have

such a complete panorama of the exhibition. Various exhibitions at MACBA have also served to recuperate past events: for the exhibition *Universal Archive. The Condition of the Document and the Modern Photographic Utopia*, the exhibition halls were transformed into the Soviet pavilion that El Lissitzky designed for the International Exhibition of Cinema and Photography of Deutscher Werkbund, presented in Stuttgart in 1929.

The materials of the archive linked with exhibitions have a special relevance, given that they reveal the evolution of the history of art and are indispensible for its study. Another source of these studies are the multiple publications related to biennials, fairs and other concrete exhibitions that constitute art history. Projects such as 'The History of Exhibitions: Beyond the Ideology of the White Cube' organised by MACBA in 2009, recuperates past exhibitions through the voices of their protagonists. The recording of these activities is also a means of gathering oral memory associated with the exhibition.

1.4.

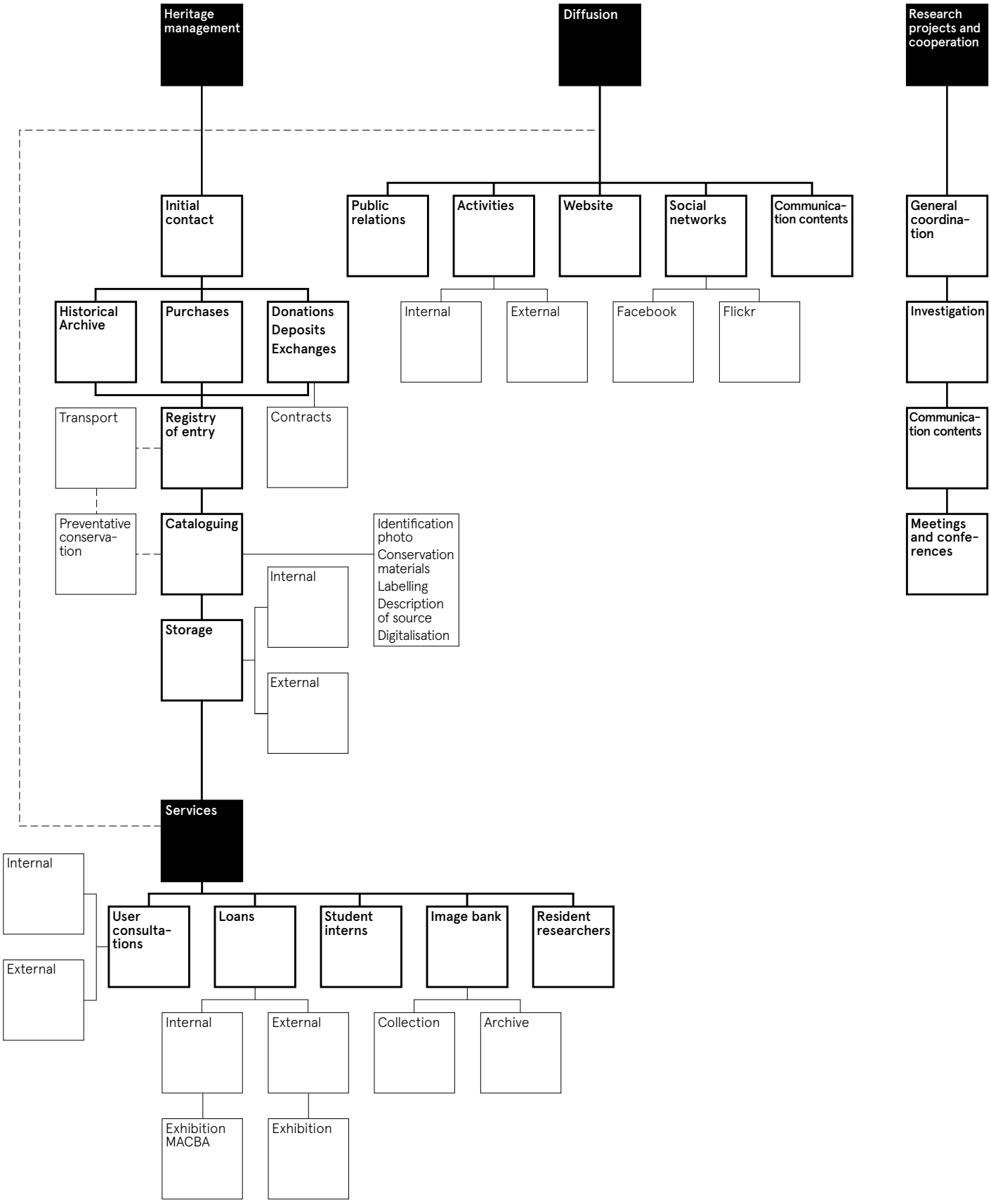
The MACBA Study Center (CED)

In the last few years, there has been a clear tendency for the art institution to privilege the context surrounding the artwork, reflecting an effort to understand artistic practice and articulate its surrounding discourses. Within this context, documentation apparatuses are acquiring increasing relevance, just as they are strengthening the place of the museum as centres of investigation and spaces for the construction of historical memory.

Along these lines, in 2007 MACBA initiated the Study Center (CED) with the idea of promoting and enriching the role of the Museum as an agent of research, linking its exhibition activities with the study and production of knowledge in the field of contemporary art. CED compiles, organises, conserves and diffuses MACBA's documentation. This role as a custodian of heritage as well as an activator of knowledge surrounding contemporary art practices is exercised through two departments: the Archive and the Library.

The Archive conserves two large groups of documentation according to its origin of production. On the one hand it prepares documentary collections that constitute groupings of documents reunited with the previous state of their creation. On the other hand, it collects important documents generated by the activity of people linked with contemporary art. These documents may contain various materials, like photographs, negatives, correspondence, manuscripts, personal diaries and other documents, often unique and unpublished. It is among these important documents that the institution of MACBA itself is to be found. The Library collects books, magazines, materials of diffusion, audio and video recordings, electronic documentaries and any kind of publication in general that documents contemporary artistic practices.

The Archive and Library, from their respective fields of specialisation, are coordinated together in order to guarantee the global and coherent management of a whole set of documents from CED. This is conducted with the objective of divulging and encouraging their use as sources of research. This shared and integrated vision allows for the drafting of a common working schematic that serves to identify the main tasks necessary to achieve the objectives of the CED. These are grouped together according to the following main lines of activity: management of heritage, diffusion and participation in research and cooperation projects. The historical archive has been inserted into the circuit of work as part of heritage documentation.


Heritage management
Diffusion
Research projects and cooperation
Initial contact
Public relations
Activities
Website
Social networks
Communication contents
General coordination
Historical Archive
Purchases
Donations
Deposits
Exchanges
Internal
External
Facebook
Flickr
Investigation
Transport
Registry of entry
Contracts
Communication contents
Preventative conservation
Cataloguing
Identification photo
Conservation materials
Labelling
Description of source
Digitalisation
Meetings and conferences
Internal
Storage
External
Services
Internal
External
User consultations
Loans
Student interns
Image bank
Resident researchers
Internal
External
Collection
Archive
Exhibition MACBA
Exhibition

MACBA does not conceive of the patrimonial documents stored at CED as an isolated set of documentation directed towards investigation, but rather as a source of constant dialogue with the Museum's collection of artworks. This relation document/artwork is not only based on the use of documentation as a source of studying the artistic collection, but also the documents – especially those in the Archive – can be the product of creative activity on the part of artists.

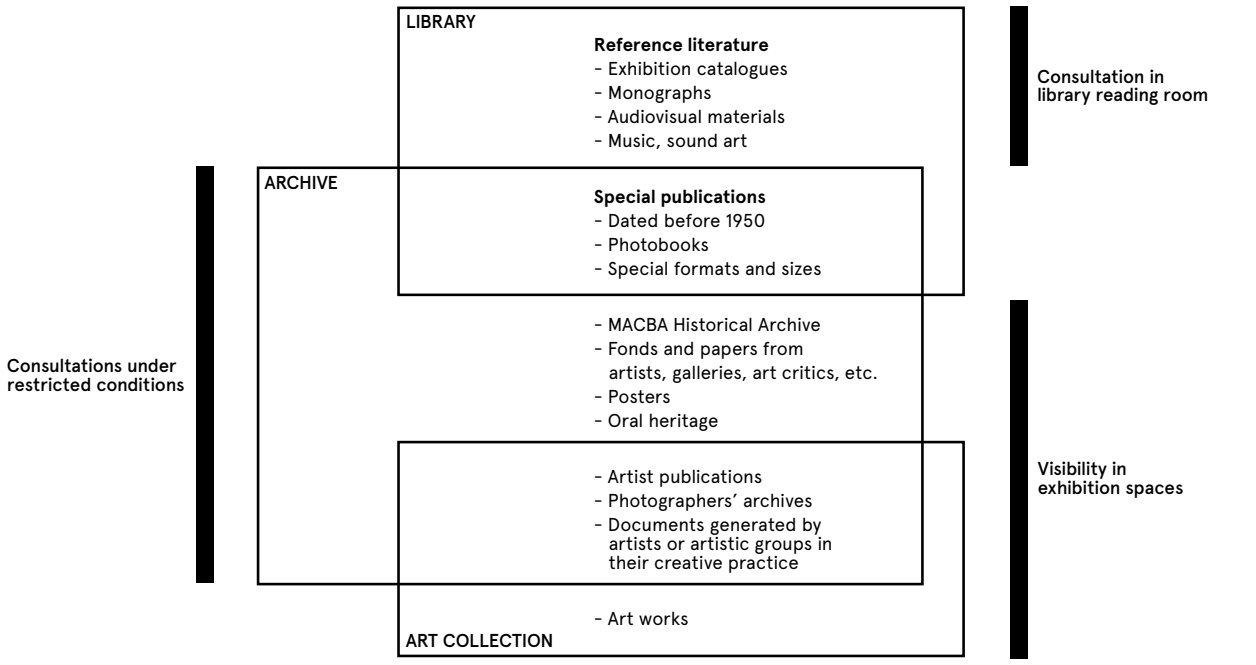
Beginning in the twentieth century, the work and the document have become, in many cases indistinguishable. Artists have often displaced the focus of their interest in the finished, conventional work with processes of work and reflection that can offer a piece as a result that would not traditionally be considered to form part of a collection of art. The importance of the document as a part of and result of artistic process is common especially in the practices aligned with the dematerialisation of the artistic object. A paradigmatic case within MACBA is the production of documentation/artistic work by early Conceptual collectives such as Grup de Treball and Art & Language.

The essential hybridity of a large section of the documents in the CED Archive emerges in its collection of artist publications. Artworks in the form of the book, magazine or other kind of material documents, artist publications require a treatment by expert personal and direct consultation with the public. Behind the decisions of an artist to use publication or documentary forms of expression, lies a will to get closer to the work, to democratise it and to offer it to the public without the distance that the exhibition format traditionally imposes. MACBA, through its Archive, offers the adequate spaces and mediums in order to allow access to the document/work respecting their natural relation to readers of these documents, which are based on direct manipulation and interpretation and not on the exhibition of materials on walls and in vitrines where they are often shown only partially.

MACBA's heritage as a whole is an entity that is managed through the Collection, the Archive and the Library, taking into account factors that reach beyond the question of whether the object collected is an artistic creation or not. This continual patrimony, which can be seen in the graphic, demonstrates the permeability between these three areas, as well as the complexity of contemporary production that plays constantly with the limits of the artistic object.

The premise of the categories of art and documentation are therefore losing definition. Many artists have incorporated art structures, concepts and systems in their works, which have included the inventories and classifications belonging to documentation itself.

Patrimonial schematic



1.5.

The Historical Archive of MACBA

Until the initiation of the CED, it was not possible to reflect on questions surrounding the Historical Archive or to carry out systematic tasks of compilation and organisation of the documentation produced by MACBA – something that is indispensable for documenting the evolution of the Museum, its history, the Collection and all of the exhibition and programming activities. It was then that it became possible to establish the basis of a system of classification, preservation and to make those documents with heritage value accessible: those that explain the history of the institution and that are a witness to the activities of the Museum.

The Historical Archive of MACBA began, with the inauguration of the CED, a mission to compile, organise, preserve and give access to the historical sources that document the evolution of the Collection, the exhibitions and the activities of the Museum.

The systemisation of the Historical Archive was initiated with a process of evaluation of documentation generated by the Museum, which permitted the identification of, on the one hand, the documents that retain an administrative, legal or fiscal value and, on the other, those that have a heritage or historic interest. This afforded decisions regarding what was to be considered part of the Historical Archive as well as an evaluation of the consequences of excluding others.

A system of managing documentation has been articulated that is capable of comprehending the definition of the lists of materials that belong to the Historical Archive, establishing a system of transfer with control sheets, establishing a system for the fiscal preparation of documents, normalising descriptions within the inventory in the database, installing documentation in the Archive and diffusing and making accessible their consultation.

After the first stage of the constitution of the Historical Archive, a phase of implementing a system of management was initiated, which put in motion a plan of diffusion and activation of its contents. The Study Center faces the permanent challenge of adapting to current culture, in which the conceptual framework related to information has changed as a consequence of technological and social transformations. The articulation of the Historical Archive determines what is archived and how it is archived, and furthermore it determines the positioning of the institution with respect to the relevance of the documentation in the writing of the history of art.

1.6.

Case studies of archives of exhibitions

1.6.1.

Questionnaire for artistic institutions

Between April and June 2012, CED directed a questionnaire to various international institutions of art in order to evaluate the state of the management of documentation generated by their exhibitions.

The questionnaire, designed by the Copenhagen Institution of Interaction Design (CIID), was diffused via email, as well as through distribution lists. Responses from 83 institutions were received,

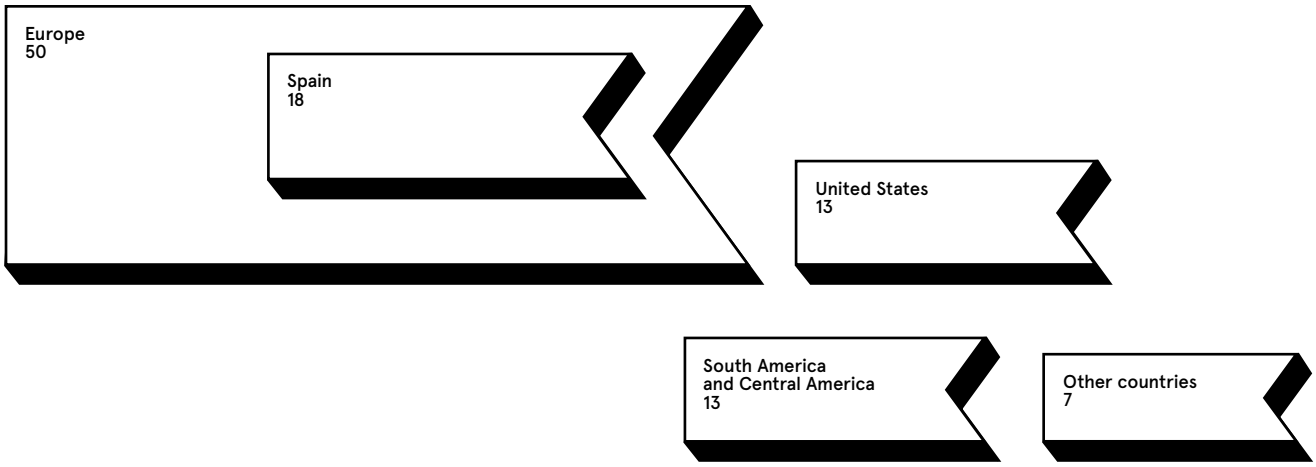
the majority of which were European (60%), with a notable presence of museums (57%).

The analysis of the data received demonstrates that 35% of the centres manage their documentation through the archive department, while 34% of institutions direct their documents to the administration department of those who maintain the sections that have been produced or received. Thus an important amount of documentation relating to exhibitions is found in the internal work circuits of the institutions, thus it becomes difficult for researchers to access the material they want to consult.

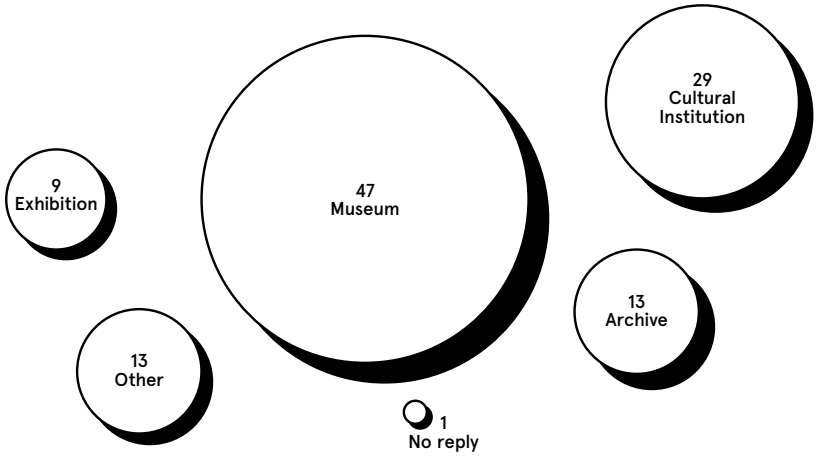
An especially relevant point of the questionnaire was dedicated to the kinds of documentation of exhibitions typically conserved by institutions. Deciding what is important to keep is one of the most important tasks when it comes to the time of organising an archival system for documenting. For this reason, a list of the different kinds of documents that it is most common to generate through the design, production, presentation and diffusion of an exhibition was suggested. The institutions were asked to specify which of these documents they keep. The answers afforded the observation that institutions normally keep photographs of the final exhibition and the press material. However, it is less common to keep the documentation associated with the processes of work, such as the exhibition plans, video documentation of mounting, versions of publications or the dossiers produced for the staff that work on the exhibition. Less than half of the institutions asked conserve these kinds of documents. Thus, the response demonstrates that there are a high number of contents that are of potential interest that could be lost, given that institutions that generate them are not prepared to conserve them. From the point of view of the technician-archivist, it was interesting to discover the criteria of classification of documents employed by the institutions. The options proposed by the questionnaire included the principle of location of production (the organisation of sources according to the offices and departments that produced them), the thematic grouping of documents or ordering based on formats and requirements of physical conservation. Despite the fact that the responses highlighted a criteria of organisation of documents following producing departments – a system often recommended by archives – the results indicated that around 20% of the institutions used different criteria to those proposed by the questionnaire: among them notably was grouping documentation chronologically, or alternatively alphabetically by title.

To describe and locate these documents, the institutions use a range of technical instruments, often complementarily. 28 institutions work with more than one of the tools proposed by the questionnaire. It should also be noted that only 27 of the 83 institutions asked have an online catalogue of databases. The low presence of information online about the archiving of exhibitions is one of the concerns of the institutions and this translated into the objective of encouraging online diffusion of the contents of the archive of exhibitions. In parallel, the main project that almost half of the institutions wanted to carry out was the digitalisation of analogical resources and improvement of the policies of preservation of digital contents.

Geographic range

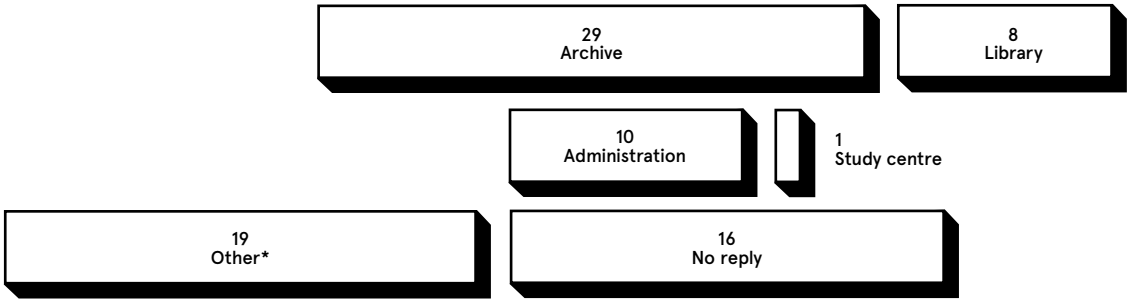


Typology of institution



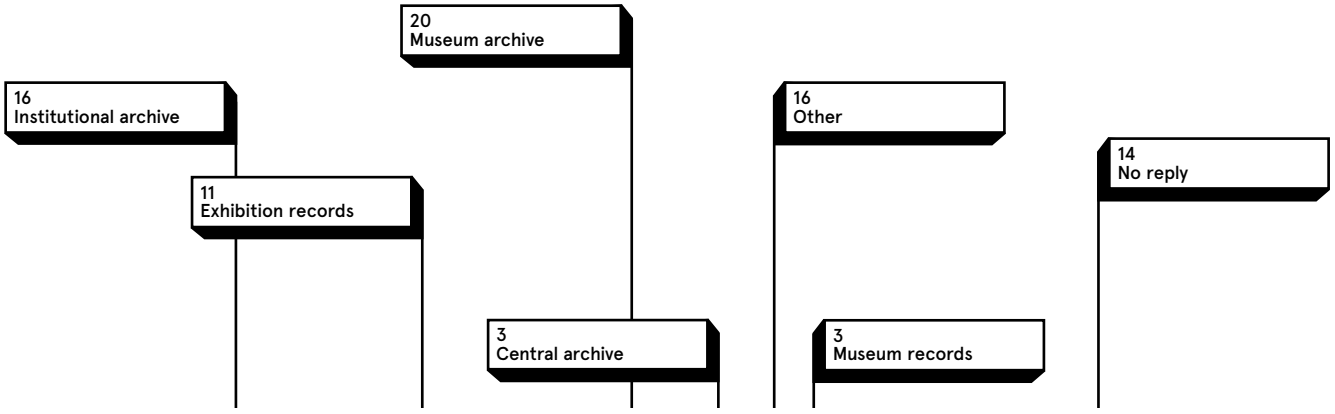
* 13 institutions have chosen more than one option

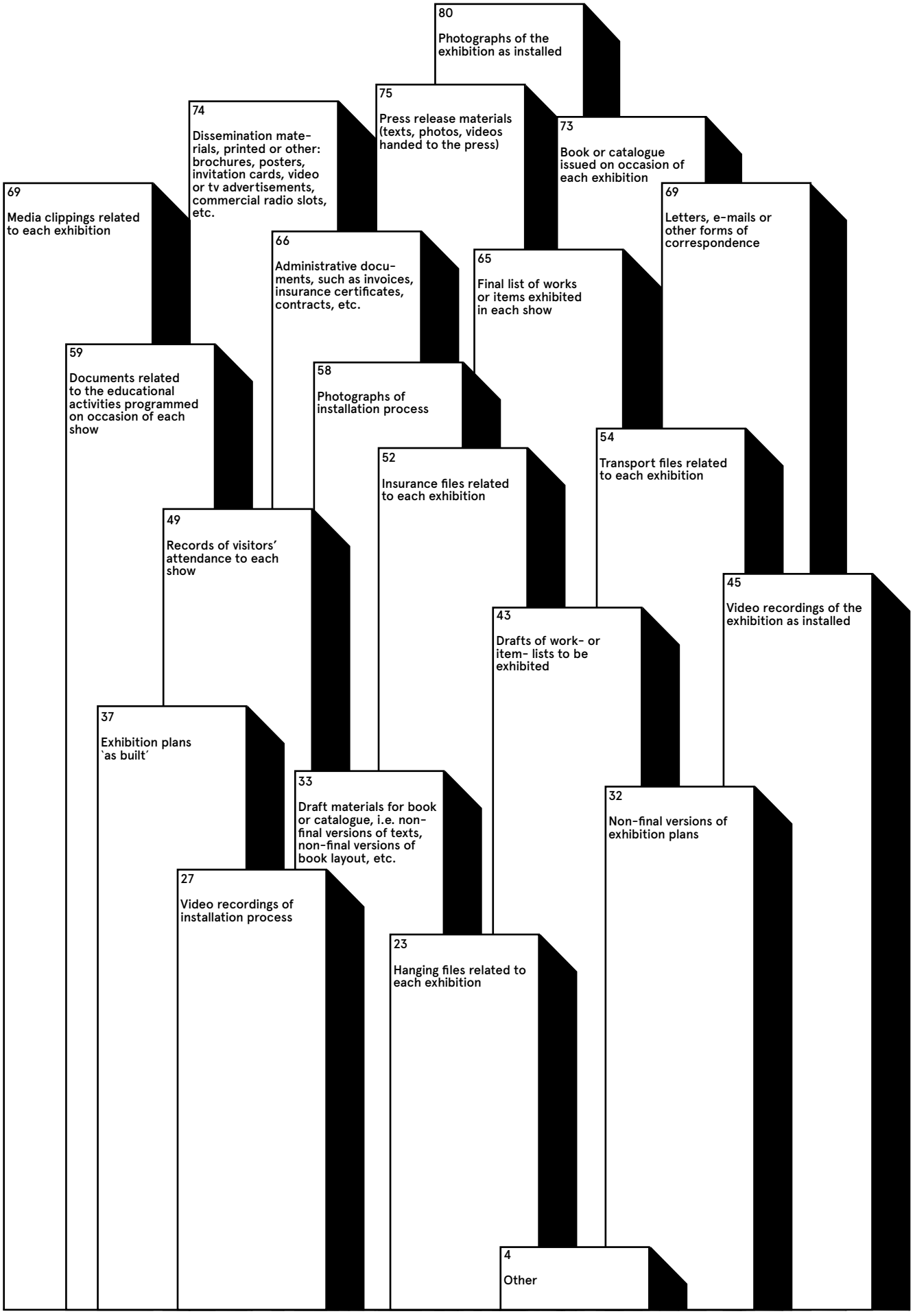
Department of the institution responsible for collecting and conserving the documentation of the archive



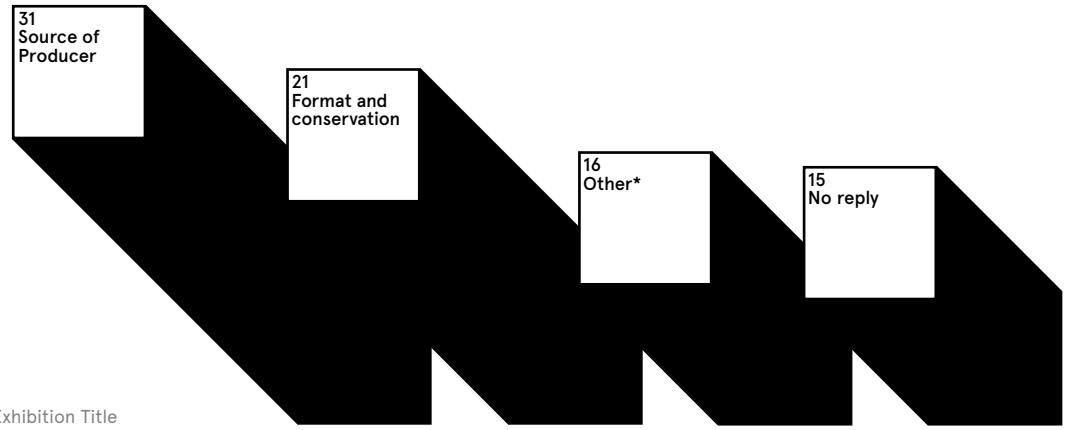
*Exhibition Department, Department for central documentation, Research

The name given to the set of documents configured by the archive



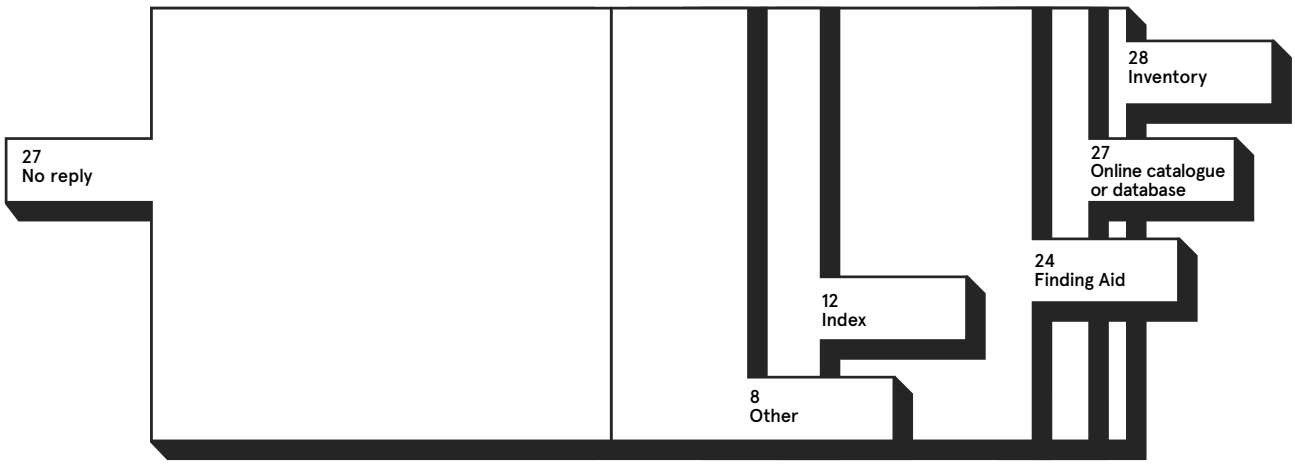

80
Photographs of the exhibition as installed
75
Press release materials (texts, photos, videos handed to the press)
74
Dissemination materials, printed or other: brochures, posters, invitation cards, video or tv advertisements, commercial radio slots, etc.
73
Book or catalogue issued on occasion of each exhibition
69
Media clippings related to each exhibition
69
Letters, e-mails or other forms of correspondence
66
Administrative documents, such as invoices, insurance certificates, contracts, etc.
65
Final list of works or items exhibited in each show
59
Documents related to the educational activities programmed on occasion of each show
58
Photographs of installation process
54
Transport files related to each exhibition
52
Insurance files related to each exhibition
49
Records of visitors' attendance to each show
45
Video recordings of the exhibition as installed
43
Drafts of work- or item- lists to be exhibited
37
Exhibition plans 'as built'
33
Draft materials for book or catalogue, i.e. non-final versions of texts, non-final versions of book layout, etc.
32
Non-final versions of exhibition plans
27
Video recordings of installation process
23
Hanging files related to each exhibition
4
Other

Criteria of organisation of the archiving of exhibitions



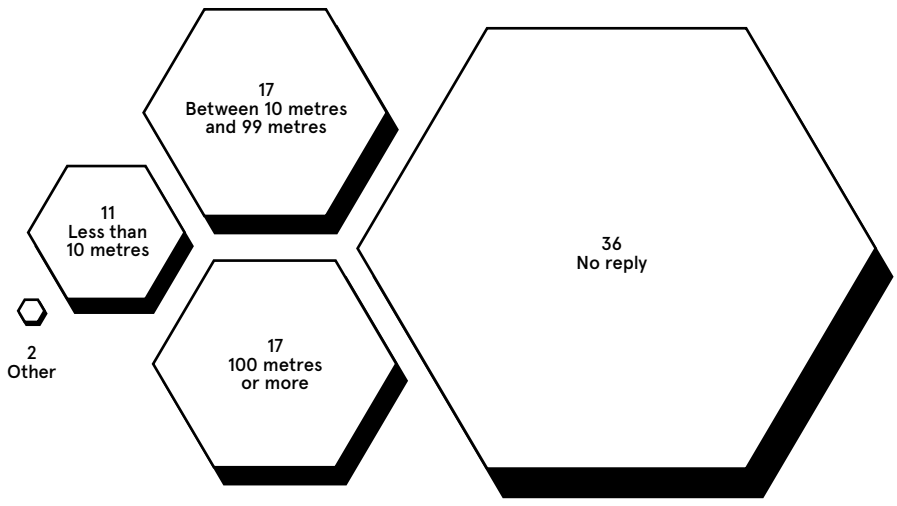
*Chronology, Exhibition Title

Development of index, inventory, catalogue, etc.

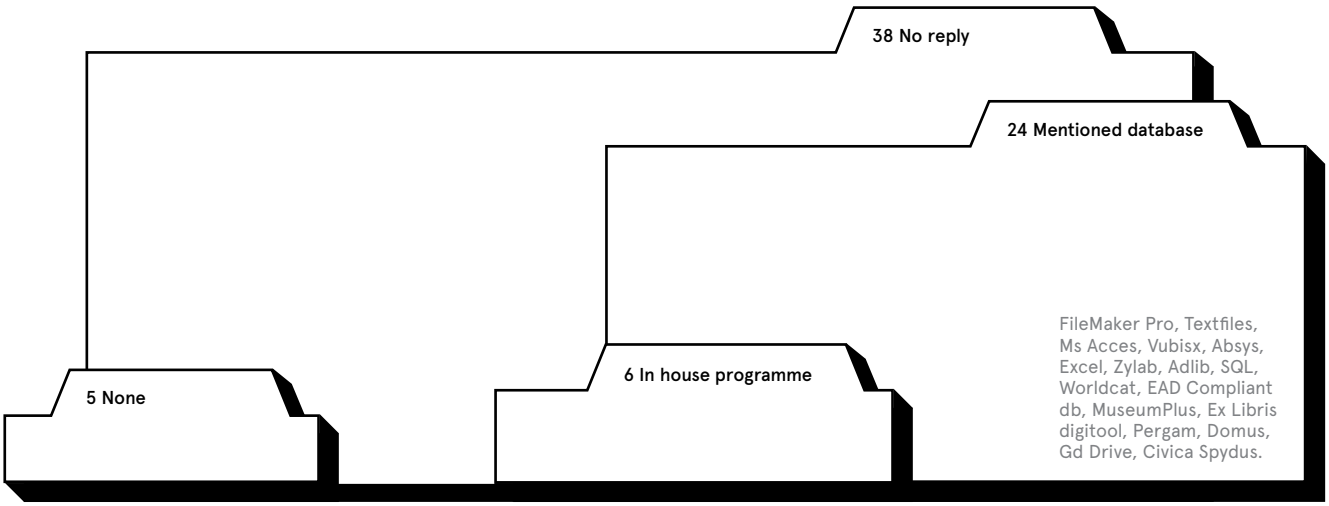


* 28 institutions have chosen more than one option

Area of archive

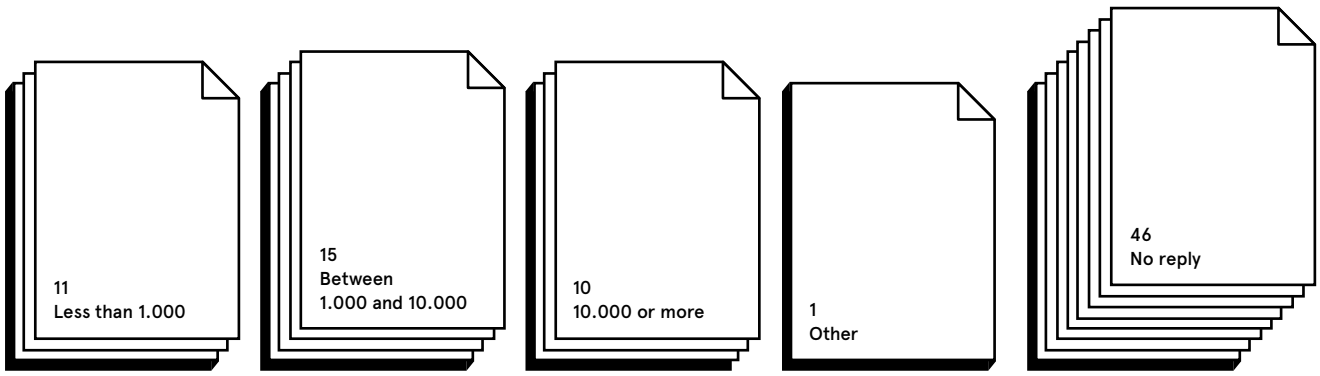


Software used for the description of documents

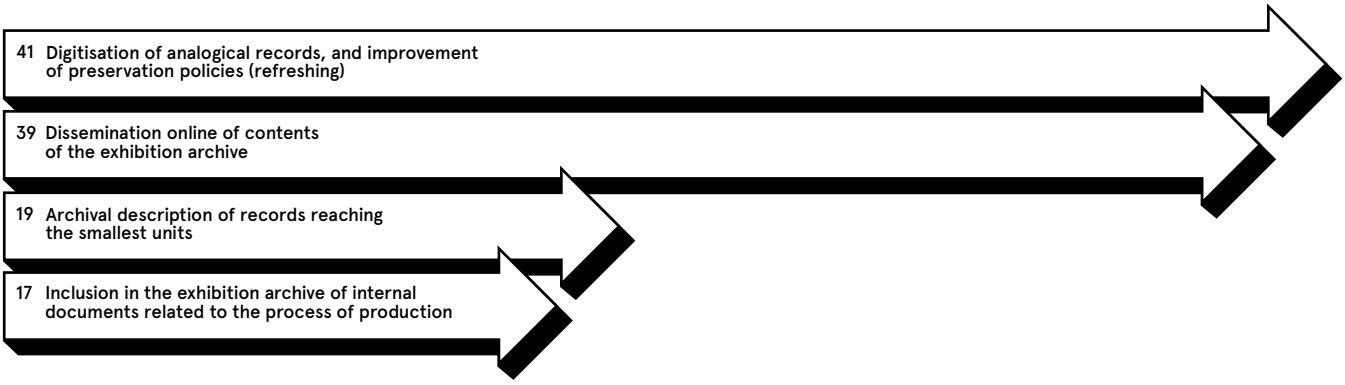


* 10 institutions have chosen more than one option

Current number of entries in database



Projects to develop in the future



1.6.2

Visiting archives of exhibitions

As part of the process of researching the documentation and archival practices focused on exhibitions, various visits in person were made to a series of archives considered exemplary in this field:

The Archivio Storico delle Arti Contemporanee (ASAC), of the Venice Biennale, which was selected for the fact that its principal focus of interest is the documentation of exhibitions.

The Centre Pompidou is a museum of international reference in contemporary art and is carrying out a careful investigation surrounding the history of exhibitions with the objective of publishing a comprehensive catalogue.

The Van Abbemuseum was selected for its project 'Living Archive', which is carrying out an innovative task of diffusing and activating their historical archive, which they integrate with their accompanying exhibitions and use to contextualise the works of art.

ASAC signage

Consulting materials in ASAC

The Archivio Storico delle Arti Contemporanee (ASAC), of the Venice Biennale

The team from the MACBA Archive visited the Archivio Storico delle Arti Contemporanee (ASAC) www.labiennale.org/it/asac/ of the Venice Biennale on the 2 May 2012, with the intention of analysing its working systems for documenting exhibitions.

ASAC compiles and conserves documentation relating to the Venice Biennale from the moment it was founded in 1895 to the present. The documents it holds include those produced by the institution in the organisation of different cultural events, which are in many cases internationally renown: International Film Festival, International Art Exhibition, International Architecture Exhibition, Festival of Contemporary Music, Theatre Festival, Festival of Contemporary Dance. At the same time, they reunite documentation and bibliographies related to the investigation and experimentation in the field of contemporary arts, entities in the wider and multidisciplinary sense that include the visual arts, architecture, film and cinema, music, dance and theatre.

The length of time it has been running, as well as the historical relevance of its contents, transforms the archive into a pioneer and a reference point on an international scale. The archive began its activity in 1928 and already by the 1970s its archivist Wladimiro Dorigo, took charge of not only the technical questions of compilation and organisation of documentation sources, but he also left a constant written record of the evolution of the archive and its working processes.

The interest of this archive in the theoretical reflection around the documentation of exhibitions was made manifest in the organisation and celebration, in 2012 and 2013, of two international conferences entitled 'Archives and Exhibitions'. ASAC was directed towards students and researchers interested in contemporary creation in general as well as the original and unpublished documentation produced by the activities of the Biennale.

The information that was collected during the visit, on 2 May 2012, is the result of consulting the archive from the point of view of the researcher. In terms of the organisation and description of the documents in the archive, it was observed that the documentation of each edition of the Biennale was described through series, without arriving at a unified documentation process. The visit focused specifically on the documentation linked with the

International Exhibition of Art of 1974, dedicated to Chile, and the 1997 edition curated by Germano Celant.

The storage and consultation space of the archive is located on an industrial estate in the outskirts of the city of Venice, in Port Marghera. Despite the fact that the institution makes a specialised library available, the fact that this is not situated in the same area prevents the possibility of consulting materials simultaneously from the archive and library.

The visit to ASAC was enriching for learning about the challenges and difficulties of the management of a high volume of material of highly specialised documentation, in terms of organisation, conservation, storage and consultation.

The archive of the Centre Pompidou

The institutional archive of the Centre Pompidou began compiling, selecting, classifying, conserving and diffusing the documents produced through activities in the museum in 1969 and continues into the present. The documentation, to be found in storage units of more than 2,500 metres, is classified into various kinds of materials – as much analogical (photographs, films, plans, signs, labels among other things) as digital (emails or databases).

The Centre Pompidou constitutes a case of special interest because they are carrying out a reflection on the history of their exhibitions through the archive and library. The objective of this reflection is the creation of a comprehensive catalogue of the exhibitions of the institution that will afford a vision of its history, as well as the museological concepts and cultural politics that have defined the different periods since its inauguration in 1977 until the present. This is a project that intends to trace the variety of elements that determine the writing of the history of art, from the selection of works exhibited to their interpretation, passing through the design of the exhibition displays and the influence of these elements on the artistic creation of the artists. The recuperation of the documentation produced around the exhibitions of this institution and conserved in their archive affords a deep analysis of the very concept of the exhibition and of the representation of history.

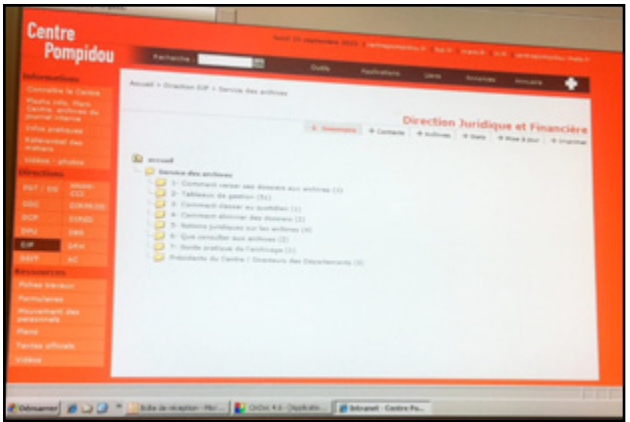
For these ends, the Centre Pompidou is developing a project of organisation, systemisation and analysis of all the documentation linked to the exhibitions and stored in the archive. For example, the documentary photographs of the exhibitions, as a historical memory of them, are the object of reflection and debate, at the same time that they are considered for their technicalities or aspects related to administration, diffusion or reception.

In order to carry out this project, the Centre Pompidou is currently funding a specific programme of scholarships for doctorate students studying the history of exhibitions, directed towards students specialised in this subject. In parallel, the institution is organising a series of seminars and international meetings with the intention of encouraging the creation of a network of investigators working on the subject.

In the visit to the Centre Pompidou, on the 23 September 2013, the MACBA team was greeted by the head representative of the archival department, Jean-Philippe Bonilli, the head representative of the photographic documentation of the Kandinsky Library, Karine Bomel, and by Angelica Gonzalez, who is a researcher participating in the project of creating a comprehensive catalogue of exhibitions of the institution.

It must be noted that the Centre Pompidou has focused on creating the archival department with the mission of compiling, cataloguing, storing and diffusing the documents produced by the activities of the institution, with both administrative and historical value.

Shelves with box files inside one of the storage units of the archive



Screen for consulting the database of descriptions of the archival documents (for internal staff use)

Shelves with film reels belonging to the archive

Shelves with photographic archival documents located in the Kandinsky Library

The notion of location of production is at the core of the organisation of the documents composing this archive, also taking into account the physical or intellectual grouping of the documentation. The archive has developed a manual for the staff of the institution with the aim of making clear the importance of conserving documentation produced in the departments in the development of their activity. This manual proposes standards for organising and transferring documents to the archive, and it does this in a very clear and visual way.

The databases that are used for describing the archive take into account the principle of location of production and afford the possibility of maintaining at all times the organic link between the document and the department or entity that has produced it.

In terms of conservation, different levels are established according to whether the documents have an administrative value or a heritage value. It takes particular care of the latter category, which is stored in special conservation material, in contrast to the rest of the documentation, which has an administrative or legal value.

Researchers can consult the sources of the archive through an inventory that is partially available online. In this inventory researchers can also access the database, where more complete descriptions of the documents are offered. They are also carrying out an extensive external project of digitalising the documentation, using OCR technology, in order to allow searches of complete texts relating to the contents of the documents.

As well as the documentation conserved in the historical archive, the Centre Pompidou has made available the Kandinsky Library, which manages the photographic sources related to the exhibitions of the Centre and those of other institutions that have gradually become integrated over the years, such as the case of the Centre de Création Industrielle (CCI).

All of these documents of the archive and library are the base of a project of a comprehensive catalogue of the exhibitions of the Centre Pompidou. As an instrument for compiling details of the project, the Centre Pompidou has designed a specific systematised file sheet for each exhibition held at the Centre since 1977. This file sheet, with more than 100 fields, is completed with information that is obtained from the proceeding documentation of the institutional archive and other external documentation sources, with special attention to the documents compiled by external curators of exhibitions.

The archive of the Van Abbemuseum

The archive of the Van Abbemuseum contains documentation surrounding the history of the museum and its exhibitions, as well as the collection of artworks in the museum dating from 1933 and continuing into the present. The archive conserves photographs, correspondence, press packets and documentation of the conception and mounting of the exhibitions, documents pertaining to the negotiations surrounding acquisitions and information about the production of publications, among other documents.

The archive of the Van Abbemuseum is considered exemplary for its interest in the influence of the archive in the writing of art history, which was made manifest in the development of the Living Archive project: a programme of exhibitions that relate works of art in the collection to the historical documentation generated for their incorporation and management. This active project of the archive functions to activate memory, giving new points of view on the exhibitions and offering a new way to access the documents that connect with the general public, and not only researchers. Since 2005 many exhibitions have been produced within this context.

The visit, made on the 1 November 2013, coincided with the mounting of the exhibition *Once Upon A Time The Collection Now*, which presented an integrated exhibition of works in the collection as well as documents from the historical archive that served to contextualise and give more information about the life of the artwork within the museum itself. The librarian and archivist, Willem Smit, greeted MACBA's visit to the library and archive.

The library and archive of the Van Abbemuseum are managed together. The historical archive of the institution is organised in three sections: the archive of exhibitions, the archive of documentation concerning the works in the collection and the administrative archive.

For the categorisation of the archive they use a program that the Eindhoven University of Technology designed to meet their specific needs. Since 2012, the Van Abbemuseum made available a repository online https://mediabank.vanabbemuseum.nl that contains the digitalisation of documents linked with the activity of the institution from 1932 to the present. This is organised in the following collections: administrative archive, artist archive, archive of exhibitions, institutional archive and archive of the collection. It also allows for the downloading of digitalised documents, in order to make searches easier for researchers. The processes of the digitalisation of documentation include collections of documentation that have been carried out with the help of external supports.

The importance given to the activation of the contents announces itself not only with the Living Archive[2] project, but also with the programming of exhibitions and specific activities. Organised for the archive and library spaces, these exhibitions and activities combine the general programming lines of the institutions with projects proposed by these areas themselves. The exhibitions are produced every two months and rely on the collaboration of artists, collectors, editors and other institutions.

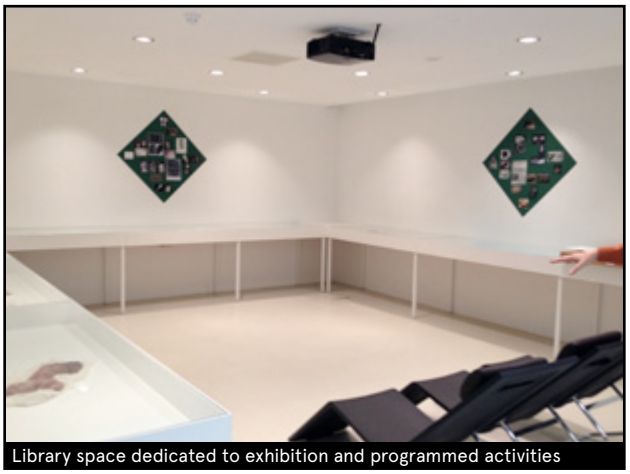
The archive and library of the Van Abbemuseum publish articles related to the contents and information about their activities on their blog http://libraryblog.vanabbe.nl/, another sign of their interest and proactivity in diffusing their documentation heritage and bibliographies and making accessible their contents.

The Living Archive project, initiated by the director of Van Abbemuseum, Charles Esche, emerges from an integrated and critical vision of artistic and archival heritage, which highlights the unavoidable link between the archive, library and collection.

One of the fundamental points in the development of the project was the proximity between the historical archive of the institution, the curatorial department and the research of the museum, which since 2005 has relied on specialist staff responsible for the activation of the historical archive through the implementation of exhibitions. Diana Franssen is in charge of these duties. This integration encourages the reflection of the nature of the archive and its influence on the writing of the history of art and makes the documents accessible to a non-specialised public.

The documentation produced by the museum affords an understanding of the context of its activities and analyses how its politics of acquisition and lines of work are reflected in all areas of the institution over periods of time. This documentation is a witness to the ideology of the museum as a public institution.

Display cases with archival documents shown in a presentation of the collection of the museum



Library space dedicated to exhibition and programmed activities

[2] See: Charles Esche, Diana Franssen and Nick Aikens, `On the Van Abbemuseum Archive. A conversation between Charles Esche, Diana Franssen and Nick Aikens, Van Abbemuseum', Field Notes, 02, December 2012. http://www.aaa.org.hk/FieldNotes/Details/1203 [Last consulted: 23/01/2014].

The Living Archive project reaches beyond the application of a method of archiving and is a consequence of the interest in reflecting on the ideology of the archive, the subjectivity of archival activity, the relevance of the transparency and responsibility of the institution throughout these questions. In this context, showing the documents of the archive means using them to explain the history of contemporary art, and specifically of the Van Abbemuseum. This is akin to approaching the museum as a machine for producing narratives and histories.

1.6.3.

Miralda, a practical case of an artist's archive

In MACBA's investigation of the documentation of exhibitions, it seemed important, as well as considering the Museum's own experience and exemplary cases of other institutions, to approach an artist's experience of their own archive. The artist – producer and archivist of the documentation produced by their projects and exhibitions – is also responsible for keeping their memory, but does not always have the knowledge, tools or skills needed to do it systematically.

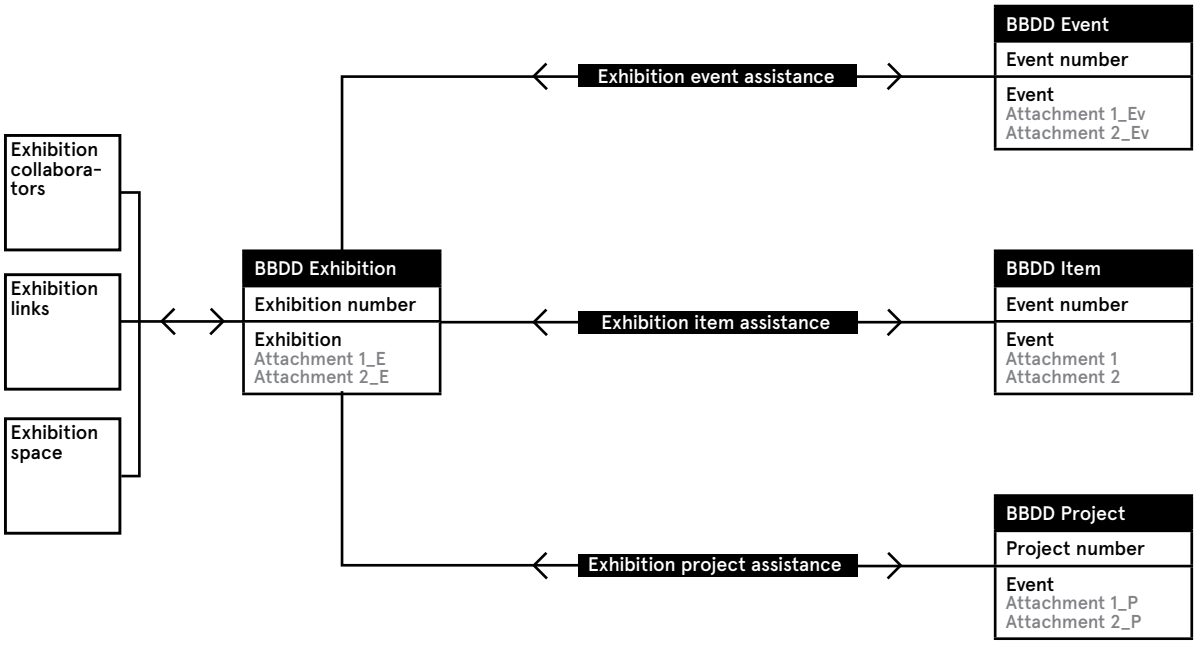
For this reason, the MACBA Study Center has developed a pilot project in collaboration with Miralda and his team. The case of this artist is considered exemplary for the relation between his work, collecting and archival practices and for the diversity of the documents generated by his projects, especially *FoodCultura*. His habitual collaboration with MACBA (his work is present in both the Archive and Collection) and the variety of projects and exhibition formats in which his work has been displayed, had to be taken into account.

Antoni Miralda was born in Terrassa (Barcelona) in 1942. After a period of two years in Paris and another stay in London, in 1966 he settled in the French capital and lived there until 1972, when he moved to New York. He currently lives between Miami and Barcelona. In the 1960s, together with the other so-called 'Catalans of Paris' – Joan Rabascall, Jaume Xifra, Benet Rossell and Dorothée Selz – he mounted a series of happenings and collective rituals surrounding the ceremony of food, focusing on its colours and symbolisms. Beginning in the 1970s, food became the object of his artistic work, initially with Dorothée Selz and later with the gastronomic conservator Montse Guillén.

Miralda has created huge installations with a non-conformist language of the festive, baroque and kitsch that brings together art and life. In notable projects such as *Honeymoon Project*, a link between the statue of Columbus in Barcelona and the Statue of Liberty in New York, a universal activity such as food serves to deconstruct the prejudices of an already global world. Many of his works promote collective participation, play and cellebration. His gastronomic ethnology has garnered him international recognition.

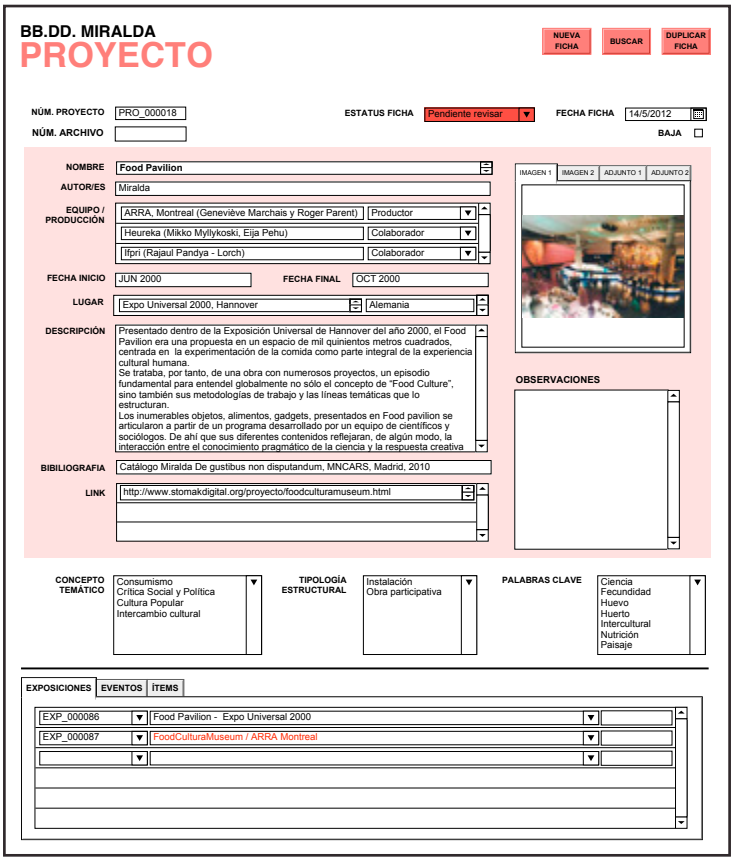
From 2000 Miralda has been focused on the FoodCultura Museum, an archive of multiple projects based around seeking and reflecting on a diversity of gastronomic practices, their link with global cultures and their artistic, social, economic and political implications. FoodCultura Museum is not a museum destined to compile and create heritage, but rather an archive of objects and experiences relating to the participatory culture surrounding the act of eating and its richness. With a base in Miami and Barcelona, he explores and diffuses food cultures through audio and video mediums, music, books, furniture, objects and all kinds of documents.

The collaboration with Miralda and his team began with an analysis of the material produced and compiled by the artist around his projects and exhibitions. As a result of this analysis, it was considered opportune to establish norms for classifying and describing the documentation and other material relations with the activity of the artist. It also became evident that it was necessary to create informatic tools capable of reflecting the complexity of the work and the diversity of the materials used and produced throughout this creative process. Thus the Study Center team conceptualised, defined and developed a database that responded to the requirements for the management of the documentation of the archive of a contemporary artist. The design of this database is structured in related tables that document projects, exhibitions, events and items, and they identify the documentation produced by them.

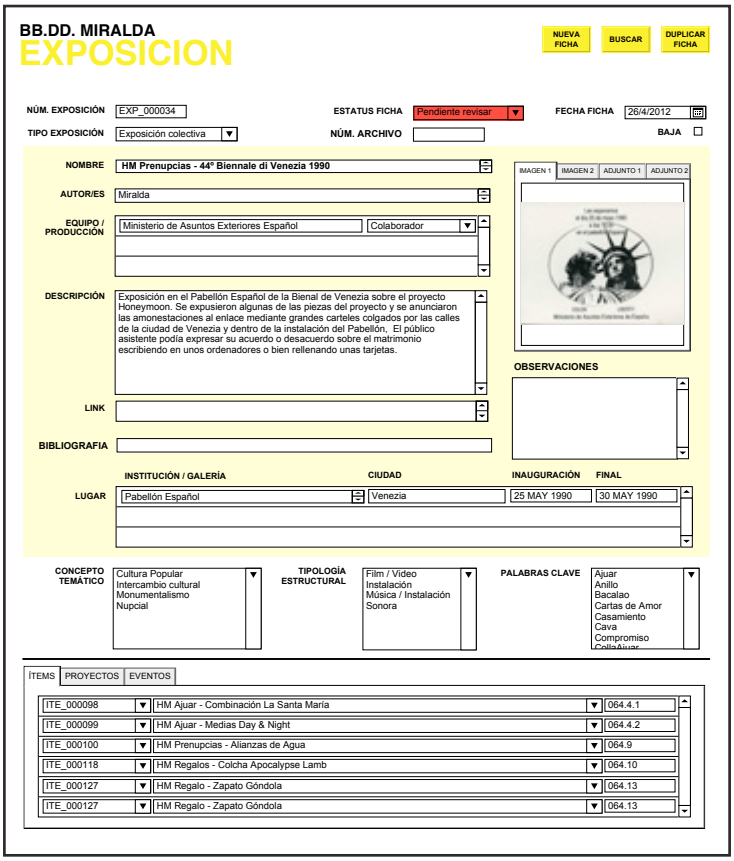


The tables contain identifying fields (titles, dates, authors and collaborators, sites and places) as well as fields relating to the concepts of the imaginary of the artist that permit the establishment of associations between different projects (key words, typologies and themes). The information was completed with illustrative images and with documents attached.

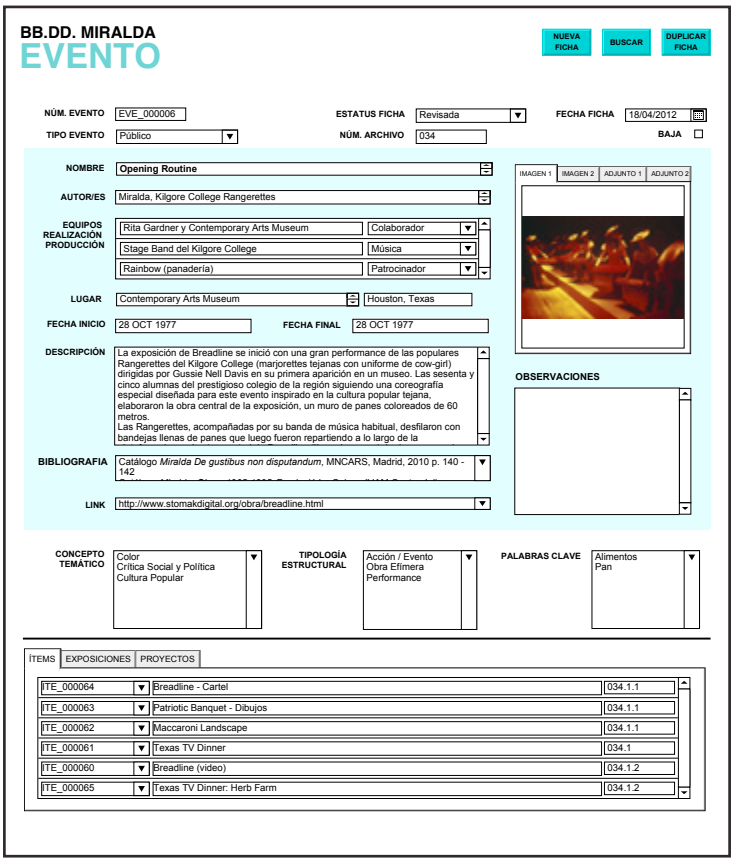
`Project' table: describes the area of artistic investigation and work that extends in time and is materialised in various works, exhibitions and events



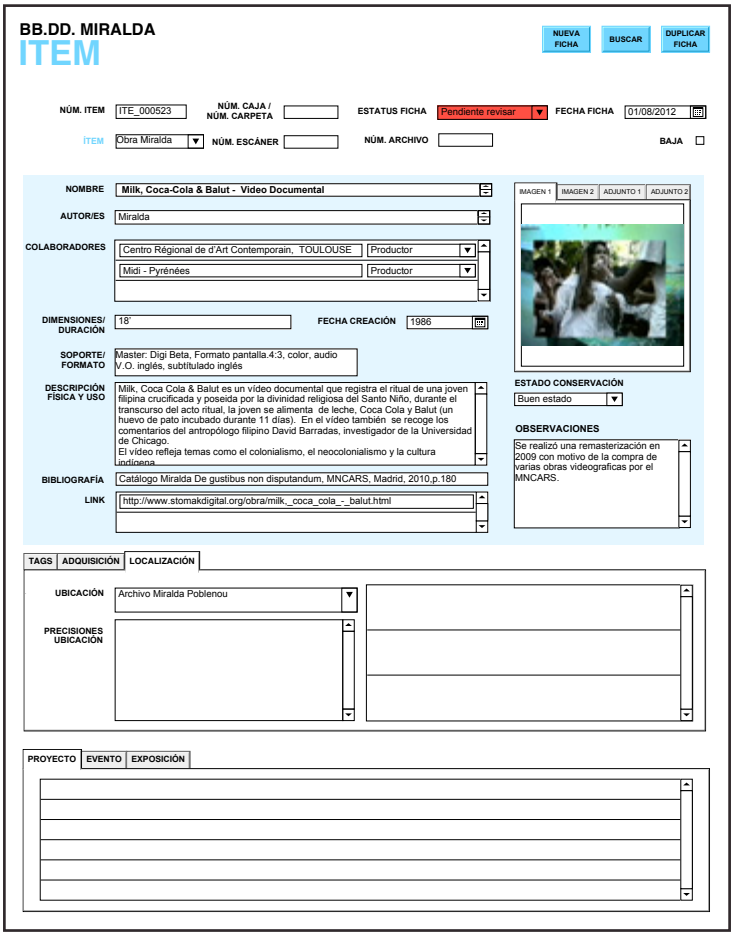
`Exhibition´ table: recollects information about the temporal collective and individual exhibitions of his work



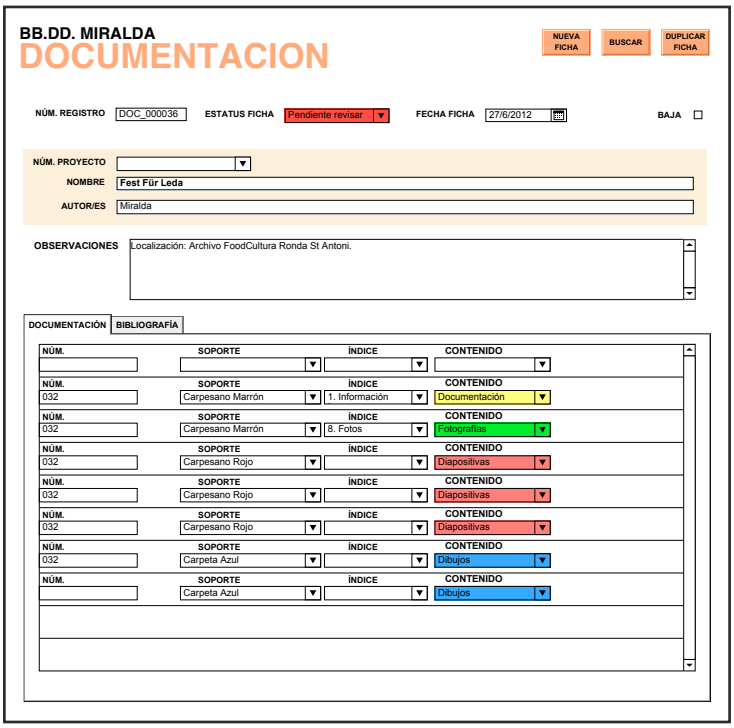
`Event´ table: documents actions and presentations



`Items´ table: describes the artworks and the objects that the artist has collected as part of his practice, many of which were shown in FoodCultura Museum



`Documentation´ table: identifies the documents associated with each project and provides information about their organisation and location



Lists of previously defined terms allow determined fields to be completed, as is the case with typology, theme and key words, among others. A system was also established that introduces information into the various fields, in order to guarantee a coherent method for cataloguing and to facilitate easy posterior recuperation of information.

As well as affording the localisation of documents, the design of the database makes it easy to produce various kinds of file sheets and agreement lists containing the requirements of managing the work of the artist.

This database was implemented as the system of work of the artist with the technical support of the team at the MACBA Study Center. The artist and his team were accompanied through the process of introducing the first examples of data, they were provided with support in solving technical problems and they were advised with regards to the normalisation of the data introduced.

This system allowed Miralda to document the projects, events, exhibitions and objects that surround his art practice, as well as manage all of the documentation produced throughout this process.

The fact that the artist and his team were those who informed the database, lends this project added value given that the information contained comes from the original source. In other words, the database is a document produced by the artist himself.

Building on this experience, in the future MACBA is willing to offer this tool as open software, as it may prove useful to artists and collectives interested in organising and describing their own archives.

1.6.4. SLIC, a collaborative project

Aside from the research conducted within the frame of the MeLa Project, the interest of the Archive at MACBA in documenting exhibitions was also expressed with the participation of the SLIC (Software Libre Instituciones Culturales), a platform for collective work.

This research team, which began their activities in 2009, deal with organisational aspects and processes particular to the documentation of archives produced by cultural institutions. The forum, constituted by cultural institutions and spaces in Spain, reflects on the accessibility (through digital media) of contents in historical archives, developing tools, conceptualisations and protocols that facilitate the communication between archives. Some of the participants of this group are the Archive of the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona (CCCB), the LABoral Centro de Arte (Gijón), la Mediateca La Caixa (Barcelona), the Fundació Antoni Tàpies (Barcelona), the Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo (CA2M, Móstoles), Medialab-Prado (Madrid), Tabakalera (Donostia), Matadero (Madrid), Hangar (Barcelona), Hamaca (Barcelona) and Intermediae (Madrid), among others.

The knowledge acquired in the research project, practical work, conversations with other institutions and shared experiences have been a point of departure in the systematisation of the Exhibitions Archive at MACBA, a project that is still in progress.

2.

Recommended practices for archiving documentation of exhibitions

The present recommendations and advised practices are the result of the desire of the Archive at MACBA to share the experience of creating their Historical Archive, which documents the institution's exhibitions, as well as translating practices of research carried out in the context of the MeLa Project. This guidebook is also an attempt to explore the topic – conceived as an open process subject to future revisions, additions and modifications – and has the stimulation of a debate and the exchange of experiences as its main intention.

2.1.

Definition and scope

The system of archival management of an institution must guarantee that all the documentation that is produced is conserved and treated according to its administrative, legal, fiscal, or heritage and historical value.

The archive of exhibitions – the object of this study – is constituted by the documents of heritage or historical value generated by the production of exhibitions and involved the formalisation of its contents. In an archive of exhibitions, documentation such as transcripts, reports, photographs, lists of works, correspondence, floor plans, materials of diffusion, publication drafts and public statistics, among other things.

The objective of MACBA's Archive of exhibitions is to document, contextualise and reflect the way in which exhibitions have been produced in the institution and what kind of repercussions they have had for the public beginning in the year 1995 and leading to the present.

2.2.

Mission

The mission of the system of the archival management of exhibitions is to identify, compile, describe, preserve, make accessible and distribute information about the exhibiting activities of the institution. The archive of exhibitions must reflect on the process of conception, production and activation of exhibitions, in order to enrich the function of the museum as a producer of knowledge.

2.3.

Legal requirements

The documentation managed by the archive can be subject to legal regulations that determine what has to be conserved and what should be eliminated. It must also consider how researchers (working autonomously from the office of origin or department) can access the documentation without compromising the regulations concerning the protection of information of a personal character that may or may not be contained in the documents.

Despite the fact that the legislation concerning archives especially affects public institutions (such is the case with many museums), independent and private institutions also have to comply with legal obligations that regulate the life of documents. Professionals and entities not only have to respond to these administrative requirements, but also that which establishes the regulations relating to the materials considered to be heritage documentation and which, for their historical value, must be conserved and made easily accessible.

The Archive of MACBA takes into account the legislation about archives in Catalonia: Article 1 of the Law 10/2001, of 13 of July, of archives and documents (DOGC, number 3437, of 24.7.2001), which was released by the government of Catalonia, states: 'The object of this Law is to propel the management and guarantee the preservation of the documentation of Catalonia, both public and private, according to its worth, in order to put them at the service of general interest; to establish the rights and obligations of those who are responsible as well as the citizens in relation with the mentioned documentation.' This law defines as public documents those produced by 'public or private institutions linked to whatever public administration that depend on them', and it attributes rights and obligations to those staff responsible. These obligations include guaranteeing the authenticity and integrity of the contents as well as the conservation of all documents.

The artists, galleries, curators, entities and professionals linked to contemporary art have to take the legislation that affects archives into account. This legislation is inspired by the desire to preserve heritage and establish easy conditions of access to any information that could be of general interest.

Thus, following the legal frame, MACBA – a platform with both public and private participation – not only has to keep its documentation for its own institutional interests, but it also has the legal responsibility to do so, precisely because its heritage documentation is linked to an institution that is relevant in the cultural history of Catalonia.

2.4.

Rules and systems of normalisation

The regulations, in so far as questions relating to the archive, are not of a mandatory character, but rather act as an orientating guide. However, there are a series of international regulations that have the objective of facilitating an exchange of information between different organisms and countries.

At this point, we should highlight the rules that regulate the management of documentation and the description of the documents.
These are the following:

- The ISO 15489:2001, which collects the principles of management of documentation and establishes the basic requisites regarding why organisations should create a frame of recommended practices in this field.
- The ISAD(G), General International Standard Archival Description, which establishes the archival descriptions that each territory can adapt to their own characteristics and necessities.

MACBA uses mainly Norma de Descripció Arxivística de Catalunya (NODAC) 2007, which adapts and develops the general rule of the ISAD(G). NODAC establishes a series of basic principles of archival description, including the following concepts:

- Respecting source. This principle includes two more: the notion of provenance, which indicates that the different sources cannot be mixed. This also includes the practice of respecting the original order, which means that the original ordering of the documents established by the office of origin must be maintained. This is done in order to preserve the existing relations and meanings between the documents.
- The archival description must reflect the classification, that is, the description of the documents collected in the system of organisation in various levels organised and related in a hierarchy.

- Archives can be described in varying levels of depth, from a general description of medium to the concrete level of the unity of the document. It is important to avoid repeating information in the description of the various levels related in the wider hierarchy.
- The archival description must be applied to all the documents in the archive, regardless of form, medium, life cycle, phase and origin.

This regulation makes reference to the description of the source and the series of documentation but gives a few guidelines for cataloguing individual documents. For this reason, the MACBA Study Center decided to adopt the *Anglo American Cataloguing Rules Second Edition* (AACR2), most commonly used in the library environment to identify which data must contain the catalogue record of each document and in what format it must be submitted.

Other rules and recommendations of interest are:

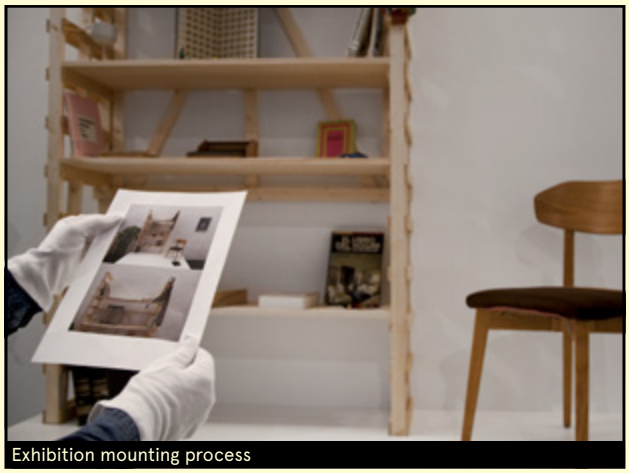
- ISAAR (CPF), *International Standard Archival Authority Record. For corporate Bodies Persons and Families. Second Editions*: complements the ISAD(G), focusing on the description of names of people and organisations producing documents.
- MoReq i MoReq2: *Model Requirements for the Management of Electronic Records*: set of requirements for the identification, description, management and use of electronic documentation, based on the Standard management of documents. ISO 15489:2001.
- UNE-ISO 23081: Set of requirements for the identification and description of electronic documents from a metadata system.
- Dublin Core. Metadata model used for the description of electronic documents.

Besides the laws and regulations, the goal is to have guidelines that allow for the organisation and description of information to be carried out in a consistent manner, within the organisation.

2.5. Offices of origin

One of the main points in the definition of the system of management of documentation is to identify the offices of origin, entities such as functional areas that carry out actions around the event of the exhibition.

In the case of medium-sized or large institutions, these offices usually correspond to the departments that structure them. Smaller institutions often run only one department or even one worker who is responsible for various duties, each one of which



Exhibition mounting process

Exhibition mounting process

corresponds to a different office of origin. In both cases, it is important not to loose sight of the objective of identifying operatives beyond the limits of the department or those individual job positions.
This is important for two reasons:

- Firstly, because both the departments and the job positions can vary with time, adapting to the mission, vision and strategic objectives that the organisation adopts in each different period, meanwhile the functionalities remain the same.
- Secondly, because the identification of the offices of origin determine the classification of the ordering of material and permits the possibility to reflect on process of work surrounding the exhibition.

In the field of museums and galleries, documentation is often grouped in dossiers that are previous compilations and which do not consider functionalities. From this point of view, the archive remains organised by events, by exhibitions, but it does not reflect the logic of the actions carried out by each office of origin. It is, in other words, an artificial system of presentation.

Identifying the offices of origin as an axis for classifying and ordering the documents obeys one of the basic fundamentals of archiving, the principle of provenance (or origin). This principle implies the grouping and non-disintegration of the documentation generated by the office of origin in compliance with its functions.

Once identified, the offices of origin elaborate a table of provenance in which a code is assigned. This system of codification affords knowledge about the origin of the documentation.

Despite the fact that the offices of origin, from the point of view of the functions, are very similar in all cases, each organisation has to make an analysis in order to identify them. As an example, we present MACBA's table of provenance, which has the offices with their corresponding code:

D099 Historical Register-Exhibitions
D100 Direction
D101 Press and Public Relations
D102 Management
D103 Administrative Management
D104 Human Resources Management
D105 Economic Management
D106 Computing and Telecommunications
D107 Contracts and Taxes
D108 Projects Spaces
D109 General Services
D110 Maintenance
D111 Supplies
D112 Cleaning
D113 Security
D114 External Resources

D115 Communication
D116 Collection
D117 Exhibitions
D118 Audiovisual
D119 Registrar
D120 Restoration and Conservation
D121 Production
D122 Archive
D123 Library
D124 Cultural Programmes
D125 Educational Programmes
D126 Academic Programmes
D127 Audiences
D128 Publications
D129 Website

Office of origin	Activity	Documents	Phases
Press and public relations	Official and institutional events	Inauguration project Invitation models Guests list Event programme Activity final report Event photos	1 2 2 2 3 3
	Press cuttings	Media communication clippings	3
	Press conference	Press package: press releases and photos Video	3 2
Architecture and general services	Space design and work production for exhibitions	Written reports on doubts regarding exhibition design Drafts (plans) Graphic documentation mounting solutions Finalised photographic mounting As-built plans	2 1 2 3 3
Publications and web	Editing and production	Original text Corrections Translated text Published images Work documentation bibliography Request reproduction of documents Correspondence Rough audio Rough video	2
	Final product	Publication Final audio Final video	3
	Website		3
Communications and marketing	Publicity design and production	Briefing Initial presentations Communications plan Definitive support (physical and electronic): Posters / Flagpoles / Fold-outs / Invitations / Flyers / Illuminated signs / Banners / Postcards / Ads / Radio spot / Online newsletter / Texts and images mailings / Product Merchandising Public surveys and profiles	1 2 2 3 3
Registrar	Register of works	List of works registered	2
	Filing claims	Incident reports Photographic documentation Condition report Correspondence	2-3
	Packing notes	Packing notes (custodial works)	2
Temporary exhibitions	Conception	Bibliography Reference documentation Exhibition proposal	1
	Design and production	Pre-project: Budget / Calendar / List of production of new works / List of provisional works / Exhibition catalogue and pamphlet / File exposure / Explanatory text / Image selection / Plan for distribution of works in space Project: Budget / Calendar / List of definitive works (list of selected works) / Loan forms / Plan for distribution of works in space / Technical architectural requirements	2
	Closures	Memory (original, electronic): Budget / Calendar / List of final works (list of exhibited works) / Texts flyers / Texts for shelves / Balance visits and public impact of the exhibition Photographic report	3
	Tours	Travelling press Material produced and delivered to MACBA by institutions that receive travelling exhibitions (promotional material, news, press releases, etc.).	3
	Documentation of exhibited works	Paper originals or in electronic format: mounting and installation instructions, video and audio technical requirements, translations and transcriptions of audio and video works, images in low or high resolution, provided by the lender or generated by MACBA to document and manage the work.	3
Restoration and conservation	Storage and restoration of works of art	Reports on the status of conservation and restoration of works of art (condition report): Cartographies / Mappings / Organoleptic analysis report of work / Chemical analysis report of work / Photographic documentation of work / Radiographs	2-3
Public programmes-Education programmes	Planning and management	Correspondence Activity worksheet	1
	Monitoring	Graphic documentation	3
	Reports and assessment	Memories and assessment of activities final report	3
	Cultural and educational contents	Educational content Educational activities outline Bibliography	3

PHASES OF THE LIFE CYCLE OF EXHIBITIONS
1 Conception and briefing
2 Production/project/construction documents
3 Final product or testimonial/memory

Documents resulting from exhibitions and conserved by the Archive

2.6.

Documentary typologies

Analysing the types of documents generated in the course of exhibitions is a basic step for organising the archive. This is complementary to the study of the activity of the offices of origin. When it comes to the moment of identifying the types of documents, it is important to take into account both content and function (invitations, press packets, lists of works, etc.) as well as the physical and formal aspects and technical characteristics (printed documents on paper, sound recordings, electronic forms and others).

The identifications of the informative and formal aspects of the documents linked to exhibitions afford the possibility to think about the most adequate form for cataloguing and classifying them, recuperating contents and establishing the criteria of conservatio and storage, while taking into account the type of technical support required by the document and the detection of the necessary equipment for reading the information they contain.

Between the documentation presented to the Archive at MACBA, understood as those physical objects about which information is recorded, it is common to find:

- Paper (printed documents, transcripts, photographs, invitations, posters, publications)
- Magnetic mediums (videotapes or audio)
- Photographic film (negatives, films)
- Digital mediums (CD, DVD, hard drives)
- Merchandising products that may contain textual or visual information

It is important to consider that information especially relevant for understanding exhibitions may be found in immaterial mediums, such as oral memory. The Archive has to look for the tools for compiling intangible knowledge from the producers of exhibitions in those documents that can actually be preserved, for example in the form of recorded interviews.

According to their features, documentation can be the channel of communication in several ways:

- Textual (catalogue texts, exhibition sheets, web)
- Photo (reports of the exhibitions, photographs of the opening show)
- Iconographic (plans, drawings, exhibition posters)
- Audiovisual (video of exhibition mounting, videos of related activities)
- Sound (interviews with artists, recordings of conferences related to the exhibition)

In the description of the document it is also important to consider the technical aspects. For example, it is practical to acknowledge that a video is an NTSC. Given that this requires a certain type of reader that reproduces recordings in the system.

Exhibitions normally generate a variety of documents, varying in form, content, technical support as well as budget, calendar, list of works, photographs, among other types of documents related to graphic production.

Some of the documents produced in the context of exhibitions are unique and in the stage before their movement to the historical archive, they have an internal use (correspondence, plans, visiting statistics). However, others are conceived with the idea of public diffusion and are reproduced in a quantity sufficiently large to be circulated, whether they are printed or distributed as a digital version (publications, materials of diffusion, social networking and web). These materials might be the only source of direct information about the activity of the institutions, and they also constitute a reflection of the public image and a graphic testimony of its evolution.

Although these are not unique documents, it is important to consider that the exhibition catalogues are not usually republished and the materials diffused are not easy to locate once the show has finished. This type of material has two stages of life: an active stage that informs the activity, guides the visits or announces an event determined by the general public. Once the active life of the material has finished, its potential audience becomes specialised. The archive, thus, has to guarantee the conservation of a sufficient number of copies of the materials published by the institution. MACBA conserves 20 example copies in the Archive in each language of each of its publications and 5 copies in each language of the materials that are printed and distributed (invitations, file sheets, leaflets).

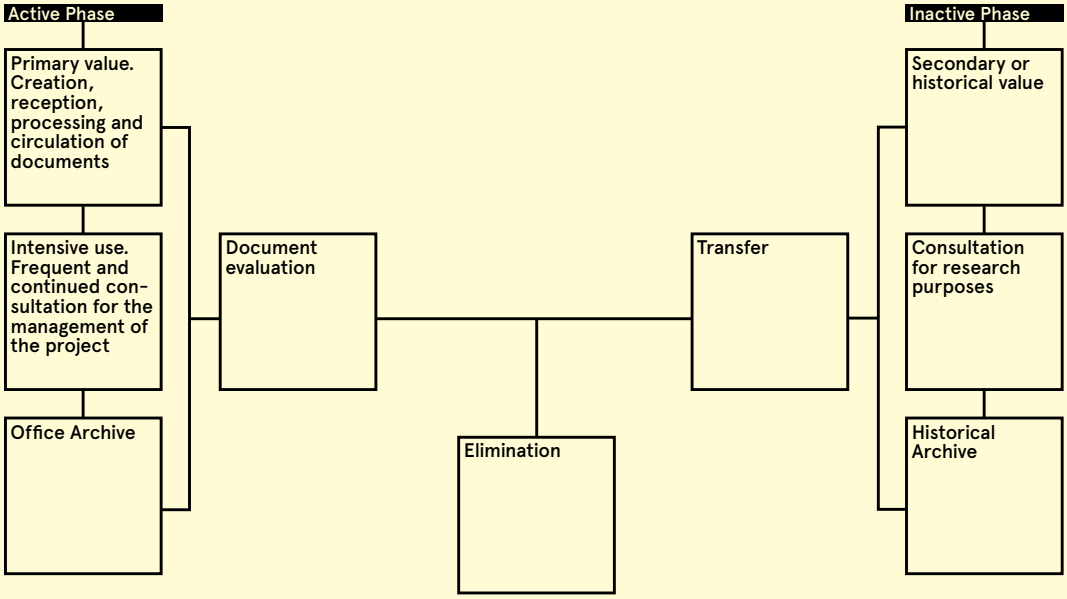
From a practical point of view, in the case of MACBA, there is a main schematic with the documentary typology that has so far been identified. This is an open proposition that will be completed according to the needs and new kinds of documentation and what needs to be combined with the physical typology of the document in order to classify it according to its content and its conservation necessities.

2.7.

Life cycle of the document

The incorporation of the archive of documents with a heritage value is determined by its life cycle, which in the case of MACBA consists of two phases. The first phase is active, that is, the phase of creation, reception, processing and circulation of the documents to the office archive that is used frequently during the management of the project. The second phase, called inactive, begins when the documents have been transferred to the Historical Archive.

When a document is created, it has a mainly practical value for the producer. It is when this functional value is lost that it is important to consider, through the evaluation of the documentation, if it should be eliminated or if the document might have a heritage value and therefore should be transferred to the archive where the documentation of permanent conservation is managed.



The function of the document is modified over time, therefore the frequency and use and the potential users also vary. When the document arrives at the Historical Archive it is no longer only of interest to the department who produced it but rather it is especially relevant to the specialised users who will consult it as part of their research. The documents of the Historical Archive are considered those that could permanently respond to future needs. The documents that have a brief useful life are not considered the subjects of the Historical Archive.

In small centres, with limited space and limited staff to manage documentation, it makes less sense to establish complex processes in the terms of phases of the documents. The most common thing is to spend time once a year filing documents that are no longer needed and placing them in a space according to their format and assigning them a code for their location. The simplest strategy, in this case, is to give each of the units a serial number, regardless of its content, in order to make the most out of the space.

2.8.

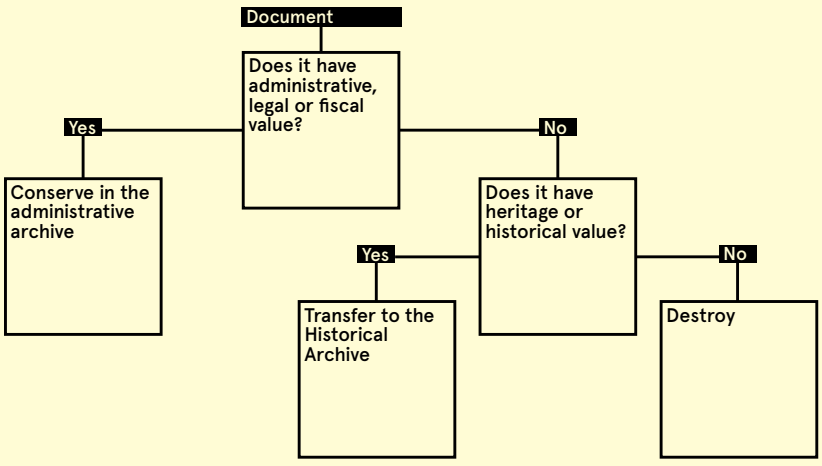
Criteria of organisation in the pre-archive stage

The management of documents begins a long time before the documentation reaches the archive, or more specifically when the process of work around an exhibition begins and starts to generate documentation. The offices of origin have to be conscious of their role when it comes to the moment of guaranteeing that the generated documentation maintains its logical order and arrives to the archive grouped in an intuitive way for its conservation. It would hardly be possible to reconstruct this order years later, so in order to avoid dispersion the responsibilities of the offices of origin and the staff must be upheld.

Because the departments can fulfil this function, it is necessary to implement a system of pre-classification that is normalised for the whole organisation. The archive has to establish some initial criteria of classification through a series of interviews with all the producers.

The process of documentary evaluation carried out by the Archive of MACBA determines the documentation that each office of origin (or department) has to preserve and pre-classify. During this process the Archive studies the juridical, fiscal, administrative and historical value of the documents and makes decisions regarding their conservation or elimination. The procedure allows for the identification of the documentation with heritage or historical interest that must be preserved as part of the memory of the exhibition. The documentation without heritage or historical value, but with fiscal or legal value, are regulated by laws of access, evaluation, which must be applied by public institutions or private entities linked to local administrations.

Example of a circuit of decisions taken during the process of evaluating documentation



To guarantee a good operation of the system, the Archive should produce a manual of clear and precise procedures that regulate the different processes of the management of documentation. Regarding the pre-archiving stage, this manual should include: recommendations on the organisation and classification of the documents to the offices; advice on what documentation it is necessary to pass on to the Archive; within what timetable and how convenient it is to transfer and how might it be recovered later.

2.9.

Transference

Transference is the procedures that facilitate the physical and legal transfer of custody of the documentation from the offices of origin (or departments) to the Archive. An efficiently managed procedure must guarantee that the offices of origin organise and describe the documents to a certain degree so that the Archive can identify the documentation, catalogue it in the way that is most faithful to its contents as well as establish the conditions of access, including any exceptional restrictions that might affect the enquiry into certain documents.

In the manual of procedures, it was necessary to highlight the importance of having the materials transferred accompanied with a document elaborated by the Archive, in which the person that realises the transfer relates and describes the content of the documentation. The model of this transfer sheet can contain the following data:

Data concerning origin and transfer:

- Department: code and name of the office that has produced the documentation
- Staff responsible for the documentation: name of the person that does the transfer
- Date of transfer
- Quantity of boxes transferred
- Transfer number
- Signatures of the person delivering the documentation and of the person receiving it

Description of documentation:

- Box Number: if the documentation is transferred in several boxes because of its volume, it is necessary to number them and indicate in the transfer sheet in which box each related document is to be found
- Name of the activity/exhibition
- Type of activity the documentation relates to: exhibition, course or seminar
- Document: calendar, final list of works, handouts etc.
- Initial date: oldest date of the document transferred
- Dates of closure: the most recent date of the document transferred
- Author: person or entity holding copyright
- Language: the language of the document
- Number of copies
- Medium: in which the information is recorded (paper, DVD, cassette)
- Format: JPG, TIFF, AVI, Mp3, etc.
- Protection of data and rights: awareness that affects the documentation in terms of the regulations concerning the protection of data of a personal character and restrictions of consultation that might affect the content of the documents. For example the list of lenders of an exhibition with their contact details
- Classification code: document code within the frame of the Archive's classification
- Number of file: number assigned to the file by the office of origin according to the system of classification provided by the Archive
- Observations: any significant factors that were not mentioned in the previous cases

Fields of information that it is recommendable to complete using regulated vocabulary lists in order to facilitate recuperation and avoid ambiguities.

Following the needs and possibilities of the institution, the model can be as the needs and possibilities of the institution, the model can be expanded or reduced to the minimum fields that afford knowledge concerning what has been transferred and when.

The office of origin (or department), in addition to filling in the transfer sheet, must check that all the documents are clearly identifiable, especially when documentation that contain media that cannot necessarily be read in a direct way – without the use

of a computer or audiovisual equipment – are transferred. It is fundamental that these media are labelled with a brief reference to its content. Finally, the Archive will assign an identification number to the transfer and will hand in a sheet of information to the office of origin containing a description of the documents, which is signed by both parties.

Although the preparation of the manual of procedures and the procedures of transfer to the Archive can seem complex or overly specific to institutions of a certain magnitude, there are minimum requirements that must be taken into account by any person or institution producing documentation around an event. Even if it is the same person that both generates and later preserves the documentation, it is important to work with a timetable of closing the activity or event and that this timetable takes into account the fact that time must be dedicated to revising and assessing the documentation produced, selected or eliminated. It is also important to produce at least a brief inventory of the documents that will be preserved permanently with a topographical code. Therefore, regardless of the dimension or size of the institutions, it is advisable to incorporate the concept of closure and transfer into the working procedures and dynamics.

Transfer form for the Historical Archive

Department:

Person in charge of documentation:

Transfer date:

Quantity of boxes transferred:

To be filled in by the Archive

Number of Transfer:

Register number of archive:

Box number	Title of activity	Type of activity	Document	Date	Author	Language	Number of copies	Media	Format	Access conditions	Copyright	Image rights	Observations

Hand in:

Name of department in charge of documentation:

Signature:

Reception:

Name of the responsible of the Archive:

Signature:

Drop down menu

Type of activity

Music and Live art activities / Timetable / Cinema and video / Cinema for children / General Communication / Conference, debate, round table Course, seminar / Exhibition / Party / Festival / MACBA family / Music / Music for children / Performance / Presentation / Independent Studies Programme (PEI) / Educational Programmes / Child and parent programmes / Projection / Publication / Workshops /Workshops for children / Guided tours / Visit-workshop / Web / Others

Document

List of documentary typologies (see p. 33)

Media

Betacam / Cassette / CD / Slide / Hard Disk / DVCam / Electronic / MiniDV / Negative / Paper/ Pendrive / Positive / Umatic / VHS

Format

AVI / DIVX / DOC / JPG / MOV / MP3 / MPG / PDF / TIFF / WAV / WMA

Access conditions

Public / Intern / With the previous authorisation of the author

Department

D100. Direction / D101. Press / D102. Management / D103. Administrative Management / D104. HR Management / D105. Economic Management D106. Computing and Telecommunications / D107. Contracts and Taxes D108. Projects Spaces / D109. General Services / D110. Maintenance D111. Supplies / D112. Cleaning / D113. Security / D114. External Resources D115. Communication / D116. Collection / D117. Exhibitions D118. Audiovisual / D119. Registrar / D120. Restoration and Conservation D121. Production / D122. Archive / D123. Library / D124. Cultural Programmes D125. Educational Programmes / D126. Academic Programmes / D127. Audiences / D128. Publications / D129. Web

Language

German / German-English / English / English-French English-Portuguese / Spanish / Spanish-English / Spanish-French Catalan / Catalan-English / Catalan-Spanish / Catalan-Spanish-English Catalan-Spanish-French / Catalan-French / French / Italian

Copyright

Yes /No / It is necessary to contact before publishing

Image rights

Yes / No / It is necessary to contact with those implicated before publishing

2.10.

Classification

The classification identifies and orders the documents in a hierarchical structure that provides a general and schematic vision of the archive. This is called a frame of classification.

Each institution has to create its own frame of classification. In the case of open archives that collect the documentation of an active institution, it is recommended that the frame is of a functional character and reflects the different activities of the organism, as well as its organisation.

In order to develop the classification, firstly it is important to analyse the organisational flowchart of the institution, identify the functions of each department and specify the type of actions whose documentation will be preserved.

This organisational flowchart can vary over time and in the larger museums it may be extremely complex. Therefore, it is necessary to identify the functional areas that generate the documentation throughout the history of the institution, regardless of the name or title each department may have in different periods. In this way the structural changes will not affect the composition of the frame of classification and can express a long-term frame.

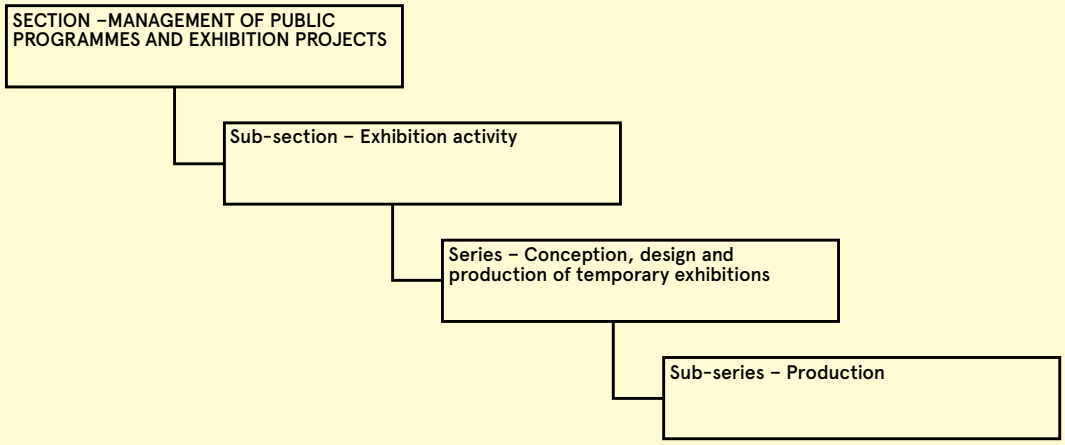
It is also necessary to consider that in this frame the documentation is classified according to the previously identified functions, and not in accordance with the person or people that carry them out. For example, the documentation produced by a purchased work and the press packet are clearly not given the same code, although the same person may have been responsible for the management of both.

At MACBA, this documentation is structured in sections that correspond to groupings of documents generated by a same office of origin, in sub-sections and in series that gather the documents produced for the same purpose and during a specific process of work.

After having identified the main sections and series, analysed the functions and activities and elaborated a proposal for the frame of classification, it is then necessary to determine the possible subdivisions that complement and delimit the entries of the frame of classification. The next step is to designate the correlated numerical codes that correspond to each entry of documentation.

Finally, this information is collected and delivered to the manual of procedures, which gives guidelines to all the members of the organisation on how to classify the documents according to the entries corresponding to the frame of classification.

To follow up, the part of the structure of the frame of classification that affects MACBA's documentation of the exhibitions is shown here:



The section 'Management of the Public Programmes and Exhibition Projects' collects a part of the documentation generated by the exhibitions. It is structured in the following hierarchical levels:

Code	Title	Level
0900	MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC PROGRAMMES AND EXHIBITION PROJECTS	Section
0901	Exhibition activity	Subsection
0902	Planning and general management of the exhibition activity	Series
0903	Conception, design and production of temporary exhibitions	Series
0904	Conception and design	Sub-series
0905	Production	Sub-series
0906	Execution and closure	Sub-series
0907	Touring	Sub-series
0908	Cultural and educational activities	Sub-section
0909	Planning, management and follow-up	Series
0910	Cultural and education contents	Series
0911	Academic and research activities	Sub-section
0912	Academic transcripts of students	Series
0913	Resident researchers	Series
0914	Students completing internships	Series
0915	Photographic and audiovisual documentation of activities	Sub-section
0916	Photographic and audiovisual documentation of exhibitions	Series
0917	Photographic and audiovisual documentation of activities	Series
0918	Public access and management	Sub-section
0919	Analysis and evaluation of activity	Sub-section
0920	Ratings by users	Series
0921	Supervision and inspection	Sub-section

For example, if the list of works generated during the design of an exhibition has to be classified, the entry 'Production' is chosen, which depends on the section 'Management of Public Programmes and Exhibition Projects'

0900	MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC PROGRAMMES AND EXHIBITION PROJECTS	Section
0901	Exhibition activity	Subsection
0902	Planning and general management of the exhibition activity	Series
0903	Conception, design and production of temporary exhibitions	Series
0904	Conception and design	Sub-series
0905	Production	Sub-series

Simultaneously there are subdivisions that can relate to different entries of the frame of classification. These may become useful to delimit the classification of a document and it can be used simultaneously to complement an entry within this frame:

Subdivisions	1. Uniform: type of archival document or transcript
	2. Specifics: concepts that belong to the certain levels of the frame of classification
	3. Nominal classification: exhibitions, activities and other products

1. Uniform subdivisions (U00)

They identify some types of archival documents or files that can be given at any level of the frame of classification.

In the case of MACBA, these are the following:

U01	Meeting minutes
U02	Calendar
U03	Certifications
U04	Checking form of delivery
U05	Convention
U06	Agreement
U07	Correspondence
U08	Audiovisual document
U09	Accounting document
U10	Photographic document
U11	Documentation support
U12	Transcript of meeting
U13	Report
U14	Memory
U15	Plans, programmes and protocols
U16	Budget
U17	Register/Inventory
U18	Application
U19	Insurance/Policy
U20	Permission/License
U21	Manuals of use

2. Specific subdivisions (E000)

They identify their own or specific concepts to certain levels of the frame of classification. These can only be used in the entries of the frame of classification to which they are associated or in its inferior entries in the hierarchy.

For example, if it is important to classify the contract of consignment of a work belonging to the MACBA Foundation, the following combination of codes would be used:

0704 E078	Management of artistic heritage. Incorporation. Deposit MACBA Foundation

3. Nominal subdivisions (N0000)

These allow the descriptions to be made more specific by entering names of people, streets, organisms, companies, etc. In the case of MACBA they have been conceived because they identify the exhibitions or other products and activities of the Museum.

For example, we can classify the list of definitive works of an exhibition combining the corresponding codes of the frame of classification.

0900	MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC PROGRAMMES AND EXHIBITION PROJECTS	Section
0901	Exhibition activity	Subsection
0903	Conception, design and production of temporary exhibitions	Series
0906	Execution and closure	Sub-series

with the code of nominal sub-division *N0522 (*Parallel Benet Rossell*)

0906 N0522	Management of Public Programmes and Exhibition Projects, Exhibition activity, Conception, design and production of temporary exhibitions, exhibition and closure Parallel Benet Rossell

Combination of subdivisions

Another case that exemplifies the possible combination of subdivisions is the classification of the document that measures the contribution of a sponsor to the exhibition *On the Margins of Art. Creation and Political Engagement* as follows:

0400	MANAGEMENT OF ECONOMIC RESOURCES
0402	Execution of budget
0410	Management of revenue

E035	Sponsorship and patronage
U09	Accounting document
N0512	On the Margins of Art. Creation and Political Engagement

0410 E035 U09 N0512	Management of economic resources. Execution of the budget. Management of revenue Sponsorship and patronage Accounting document On the Margins of Art. Creation and Political Engagement

This system of classification applies to any archival document: electronic documents as well as documents in other media.

2.11. Cataloguing

The documentation of the Archive is controlled using instruments such as register, inventory and other records of cataloguing.

A minimum requirement that would have to satisfy the Archive is the maintenance of a general inventory that consigns all the material and fulfils the function of testing the existence of documents and specifying their location.

Cataloguing, unlike the process of registering and producing the inventory, elaborates on the contents of the object described. It goes beyond mere listing and rather describes the essential parts of the material and the place that it has occupied in the organisation of the system, as well as the ordering of its content and how these conditions might be recovered.

Cataloguing, then, is a tool of description that fulfils the following functions in the system of documentation management:

- It permits the possibility of assigning a unique identity to each object with an identification number
- It establishes relations between different material contents in the archive
- It allows each object to be located through means of the endowment of atopographical code
- It allows us to know the total number of objects that form the source, or of a part of it
- It facilitates access to documentation
- It facilitates its management
- It facilitates its diffusion

Preservation boxes with exhibition documentation

Flat storage cabinet with posters relating to exhibitions

It is important that the catalogue description of archival documents is normalised. In order to keep a system of documentation, it is necessary to adhere to various guidelines and homogenous systems, some of which will have been established by the Archive, which collects them in a series of protocols. These guidelines are usually concrete forms of bibliographic norms of description than each archive adapts in accordance with its capacities and recovery needs. Thus each organisation has its own protocol for cataloguing that must contain the systematised vocabularies or pre-established schematic descriptions.

When it comes to confronting the cataloguing of a source of documentation, priorities must be established concerning the level of depth that the description of each document in the series has in accordance with its relevance and nature – especially since not all of the documents should be described in the same exhaustive way. For example, an institution might not consider it necessary to describe each photograph recording the exhibition individually – identifying all of the works of art that appear – and instead do a general description of the reporting of the show opening, without detailing the content of each image.

2.12.

Computer system

The computer system chosen must be deployed at the service of the aims, functions and recovery and diffusion needs of the Archive. At the time of choosing or designing a program, it is fundamental to assess if it will be a tool of documentation management from the moment the material is created by the office of origin until their elimination, or if it will only be used to catalogue the documents that will be preserved long-term in the historical archive.

It is necessary to consider that a system that manages the entire life cycle of the document may require functionalities tied to administrative processes, such as the management of electronic signatures, the control of versions of documents or the automatic allocation of codes of classification, among others.

In the case of MACBA, the documentation related to exhibitions (and other contents more strictly artistic) forms part of the Historical Archive, which does not manage the more strictly administrative documents. In the computerisation of the management of the historical/heritage documentation, it is not a priority to accompany the documents during their entire life cycle, but rather to provide a fairly complete description of the documentation, showing the existing relations between the documents produced by the same activity, facilitate the recovery for different points of access and offer a clear presentation of the results of the searches.

The program chosen would have to articulate the management of the documents in the environment of a central axis, which is the activity that generated them. It must at least permit:

- The identification of the basic data of each document: identifier, office of origin, author, title of the document, title of the related activity, date, type of document, physical description, code of classification, notes, key words, location
- The identification of the documentary series: identifier, office of origin, title of the series, dates of start and closure, code of classification
- The establishment of hierarchical relations between the documentary series and the documents
- The management loans and the movement of documents
- A process of following-up on the interventions of conservation and restoration.
- The exploitation of the data for its recovery through listings and through public consultation of the online catalogue

Also it is necessary to consider the integration of the source of the historical archive together with the heritage (documentary, bibliographic and artistic) of the institution. An example case is that in museums, the historical archive is managed by a centre of documentation – the library and archive. The documentation centre, the library or the archive, manage both other documentation collections as well as personal deposits and sources. In the case of MACBA, the Archive can share the resources of the Museum with other departments responsible for the heritage of the institution, such as the Collection. Therefore, the integration of the computer system and the Historical Archive helps to increase the potential of documentary heritage becoming the object of exhibition.

2.13.

Conservation and storage

It is important that the archive adheres to certain requisites of storage and certain conditions of preservation in order to achieve the conservation of documents.

If it is possible, space will be given to install the sources, taking into account the different kinds of documents that are to be stored. The storage units where the archive can be found would preferably have to be in a separate area, fire resistant, and be protected from floods, insects, theft and other dangers.

Preventative conservation is the most efficient tool for avoiding a situation in which the material is disrupted or damaged. It is advisable to seek the counsel of a conservator or restorer in order to create the adequate prevention strategy corresponding to the specific needs of each archive, in accordance with the environmental conditions, the volume of documents and the different typologies of the sources, among other factors. At the same time, it is useful to establish an emergency plan that designates which documents should be saved as a priority, in the case that it would be possible to do so.

The main causes of degradation that might affect the documents are normally environmental, biological and human factors.

The environmental factors are the temperature, relative humidity (RH), light and atmospheric pollution.

The optimal temperature and RH levels are not universals, but rather they vary following the type of material and external environmental conditions. It is important to maintain stable values and avoid abrupt fluctuations of these parameters, as well as facilitate the circulation of air in order to create a well-ventilated environment.

Cleaning tasks for photographic documents

Preservation-restoration materials for the handling of documents

It is recommendable to use florescent illumination with filters in order to avoid UV radiation, or incandescent illumination well removed from the sources because the heat of these lights may affect them. It is also convenient to install filters and matting in the windows to reduce sunlight.

The optimal environmental conditions of conservation applied at MACBA are:

- Paper: a relative humidity of 50–60% and an ideal temperature of between 18º and 22º C
- Photographic film: a relative humidity of 30–50% and an ideal temperature of between 4º and 18º C
- Magnetic supports: a relative humidity not more than 40% and an ideal temperature of between 10º and 15 ºC
- Digital mediums: avoid fluctuations of temperature and HR, and any contact with magnetic fields
- Every type of documentation: cold light and UVA filters, not surpassing the exhibition 50 LUX of illumination and not surpassing 75 mW/lumen of UV radiation

To avoid the biological attack of microorganisms (fungus and bacteria), good ventilation and cleanliness is recommended. Dust can contain metallic particles and grease, it may also retain a humidity, which constitutes an ideal environment for the proliferation of insects and micro-organisms that represent a grave danger for the health of people and the safeguarding of heritage documentation. Also linked to environmental factors such as high humidity and heightened temperature are the chemical reactions that can destroy the materials. Constant ventilation is the best instrument for reducing fluctuations of relative humidity and temperature. Lowering the environmental humidity reduces the risk of processing condensation produced by cold surfaces. Ventilation also avoids the accumulation of polluting atmospheric gases and it is essential for reducing the growth of microbial and the germination of spores. A good system of ventilation must be clean and renovate the air periodically.

The process of cleaning the spaces helps us to understand the state of the collections and prolong their useful life. It is a fundamentally preventative conservation activity, deployed to control the conditions of the place where the material is, which has the aim of avoiding the effects of dust.

The other factor that can alter the conservation of documentation is human error, which can cause physiochemical alterations to the material. It is recommendable:

- To ensure the place of work is clean. The table can be protected with dry paper or permanent paper
- For most of the delicate documents in the box to be put in containers with sleeves or covers
- To avoid especially acid envelopes and folders that can badly affect the documents

- To avoid metallic-type materials, paperclips, tapes and adhesive notes
- To preserve newspaper clippings separately because the paper has a high degree of acidity that can affect other documents
- To manipulate sources with care and with the clean hands
- To handle works and documents securely; with two hands for the side of surface that is firmer or wider. Or, in the case of flat material such as posters, to hold the inferior and upper opposite corners together, to avoid deformations or wrinkles
- To manipulate delicate or valuable documentation with cotton, vinyl or latex gloves without talcum powder
- To open folded documents to avoid the risk that the end up being torn.
- To use graphite pencils (of 2B) and not to place or stick notes to files or works when they are being written
- To not use cutting instruments or anything with ink near the documents
- That in no case should food or drink be allowed in the consultation rooms. Accidents can occur and can cause stains, aureoles of humidity, discolouration of inks and the proliferation of microorganisms

In the case of the digital documents – taking into account the risk of obsolescence – it is advisable to use formats that can be migrated to new codifications, in order to guarantee the integrity of the documents and the future access to its content. It is necessary to establish guidelines for the realisation of periodic conversions to other formats, as well as foresee strategies of emulation in order to access the contents of non-transferable digital documents.

If it is not possible to provide space with controlled conditions, the institution may be able to deposit their materials in a nearby institution that allows the continuation of the management of sources or rather it might consider the creation of an agreement that permits cooperation with other institutions in order to ensure that the sources are treated with optimum conditions of conservation.

2.14.

Digitalisation and other electronic documents

One of the challenges for systems of managing documentation is the digitalisation of its documents. The process can be very complex and there is currently a lack of accepted or normalised standards and the process may require a large quantity of resources.

The main aims of the digitalisation of documents are:
- The preservation of heritage
- Diffusion, both to the specialised publics as much as general audiences
- The improvement of the accessibility to the knowledge

The process of digitalisation is comprised by different tasks, such as the preparation of a manual of digitalisation, the digitalisation in itself, the creation of legible links between the digital objects created to the registers in the catalogue and the publication of the digital objects on the online repositories or websites of the institutions.

Each institution must plan the preservation and diffusion of its digital contents, including the derivatives of the exhibitions. This plan must be an active long-term commitment, and it must have a transversal character counting on the collaboration of specialists in different areas of the institution (archivists, restorers, computer technicians etc.). In this plan it is important to consider different aspects, such as:

- Deciding what materials have to be digitalised. The materials in a precarious state of conservation are normally priorised as well as those that have a greater content relevance, or if they are frequently requested by researchers. Materials of little interest to users or those that are sensitive to copyright are not digitalised.
- Having the necessary technological means.
- Having a system of storage that ensures the integrity of the digital objects.
- Studying the feasibility and economic sustainability of digitalisation. This is related to the timetable of digitalisation and takes into account the human and technological resources and costs required to complete the project.
- Foreseeing the exponential growth of digital contents.
- Defining the technical requirements, the standards that the process must adhere to as well as producing a system for dealing with the digital objects produced. With the purpose of ensuring the preservation of the documents and to favor the cooperation with other institutions, it is important to acknowledge questions regarding the format, the quality, resolution, depth of parts and compression.

Several international institutions have published guides on the practical recommendations that specify the formats and standards that must be followed in order to ensure the sharing of information digitally. MACBA uses the guide published by the Biblioteca de Catalunya, the Col·legi Oficial de Bibliotecaris -Documentalistes de Catalunya and the Consorci de Biblioteques Universitàries www.bnc.cat/professionals/digitalitzacio.

Scanning process for digitalizing documents

In the process of describing digital objects we recommend using the methods established by the standard OAI-PMH in format Dublin Core (The Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting www.openarchives.org/pmh/), which ensures interoperability.

It is recommendable that small-scale institutions or those with fewer resources make a flexible interpretation of these standards as well as consider the economic, infrastructure and knowledge limitations of their organisation.

Digitalisation favours the preservation of documentation. It is necessary to remark however that scanning documents does not ensure their preservation neither does it imply an act of preservation directly. For example, the digitalisation of an analogue document in a DVD is not necessarily a preservation copy, because the DVD is a format that compresses the information (therefore, the DVD is usually of a worse quality than the original) and the only advantage that it offers is an improvement in short-term access.

The digitalisation manual must consider methodological aspects that ensure that manipulation during the process of digitalisation does not compromise the conservation state of the documents. In order to establish these guidelines we recommend soliciting the counsel of professionals specialised in conservation and restoration. Some of the main recommendations are to:

- Have a suitable area where one can work in comfort.
- Prepare the originals before digitalisation: clean them and have them in a good state of conservation. In some cases it will be necessary to make restoration interventions.
- Use latex, vinyl or nitrile without latex gloves.
- Use scanners and teams especially prepared for the digitalisation of each type of document: negatives, slides, transparencies, paper, etc.
- Before digitalising, take out any metallic elements, such as paperclips or adhesive tapes.

It is also necessary to consider the specific legal regulations relating to digitalisation, both those that make reference to the accessibility of the documents as well as those related

to the diffusion of their digital versions. Each institution has to respect their country's laws designed to regulate this process, such as intellectual property rights, personal data protection laws, image rights, laws relating to cultural heritage, archives and documents.

The traditional form of consulting archival documentation and accessing them is through consultations in person at the library archive. However, in the last few years digitalisation has promoted access to the documents contained in the archive beyond the physical limits of the materials, extending their diffusion through the Internet. Access to documents linked to artistic institutions is no longer mediated by physical consultation.

Digitalisation has, among other advantages, the opportunity to increase the diffusion and facilitate research. The change of habits on the part of the users means that researchers, and even the general public, wait for the institutions – both public and private – to give access to information about their activities online. The point about offering online consulting of digital documents is that it encourages interest in archives and increases the number of visits to the archive in person, as well as favouring the precision of the consultations of the researchers interested in accessing the physical documentation stored in these archives.

At the moment, MACBA is creating a digital repository that will contain the artistic and heritage documentation of the institution. This repository is conceived as a means of conserving its contents, managing them (both internally and externally) and diffusing them. An important part of the project is the preservation of the audiovisual works of the Collection, both those that were already in digital form and those that have been digitalised. It also seeks to be used as a means of giving access to the documentation related to the exhibitions produced by MACBA.

2.15.

Conditions of access

The access of documents and public archives, in terms of consultation, is a recognised citizen right, despite the fact that the grade of confidentiality established for each series of documents must be adjusted. It is important, however, to carry this out through determined and defined procedures.

Despite the fact that promoting the consultation of documentation with a heritage value is one of the main objectives of the Archive, it is also important to deal with the fact that the documents may contain sensitive information from the perspective of personal data protection laws, intellectual property or image rights. Thus, it is important to consider the relevant laws in each case.

MACBA applies the Law 10/2001, of the 13 of July, of archive and documents (DOGC number. 3437 of 24.7.2001), which, in as much as it makes reference to the rights of access to documentation, establishes the following conditions:

General Law:

- Free consultation of documents of more than 30 years old

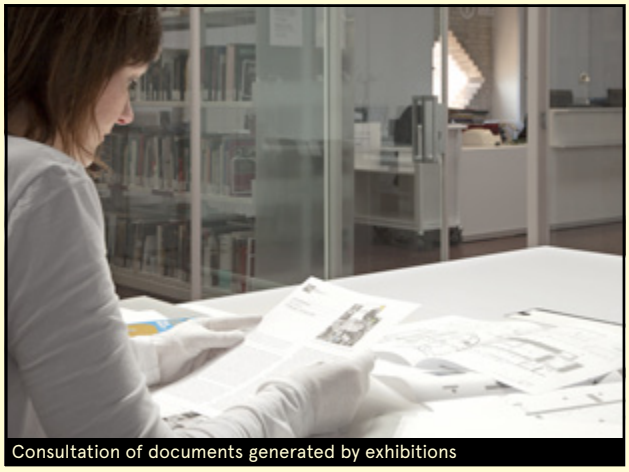
The documents that contain data of personal character can be consulted:

- With the consent of the affected
- 25 years after their death or, if this is not known: 50 years from the production date of the document

Exception:

- Free consultations for historical, research or statistical purposes, whenever they do not further distribute the individual data

Special Collections Room at MACBA Study Center



Consultation of documents generated by exhibitions

To avoid confusions, it is recommended to mark the containers of the documents that have consultation restrictions with an identifying system that allows the professionals of the archive to easily detect which documents contain details of a personal character.

Loaning and obtaining duplications of documents can be restricted because of conservation reasons and in order to avoid confidential data being distributed. Reproducing documents of the Archive can only be completed through taking photographs. The material cannot be digitalised or photocopied, because these systems, without the supervision of a restorer, might damage the documents. The reproduction of original photographic material is regulated by specific laws.

If photocopies are made for publication, it is important for the person asking for this material to coordinate the corresponding copyright issues, if there are any. For example, the photographic reportage of an exhibition may display works of art that in turn may be subject to copyright issues requiring payments to be made to the artist or their representative institutions.

As well as abiding by the legal framework, the laws of access to the documents of the Archive must consider issues concerning the physical preservation of materials. With these objectives in mind, the MACBA Study Center has made a special consultations room available, which provides the adequate space for researchers to work with the documentation of the Archive in conditions of security. In this space, it is possible to enter only with the minimal necessary tools: personal computer, camera and a notepad. It is also obligatory to use gloves if the visitor would like to touch the documents and all notes must be made in pencil.

To consult documents in the Historical Archive of MACBA, an appointment must be arranged previously with a minimum of 48 hours in order to allow the staff at the Archive time to prepare the documents, which are normally in storage. The number of documents or volumes that users might consult in each session depends on the character of these materials, and is at the discretion of the staff at the Archive taking into account the criteria of conservation and security. If there is a digital copy of the material requested, this will be offered instead of the original. Only in certain cases will the CED allow the consultation of original documentation. When this does occur all relevant security measures will be taken.

The Historical Archive has to be accessible to members of staff, students and whoever would like to consult the material for research reasons, in compliance with the regulations of access that, as mentioned, concern fragility, security and confidentiality of the documents.

The laws and regulations of access are applied equally to all researchers and they must be written and published and made available to the users.

2.16.

Diffusion and activation

One of the main aims of an archive, as a public service, is to activate and generate the interest of the public. Before establishing any strategies of diffusion and distribution, it is necessary to do a process of reflection that determines what kinds of audiences are interested in the contents of the Historical Archive.

Throughout the current uses of the Historical Archive at MACBA, three main groups of users can be distinguished:

- Museum staff: consult documentation and analyse it in order to manage the activities and take decisions regarding future projects.
- Researchers: study the documents, for example photographs, publications and transcripts.
- The general public: access the documents when they are exhibited in exhibitions or when they are diffused through the social networks and other online resources.

At the moment CED organises visits to the Archive for groups from different fields: students, teachers, staff from cultural institutions and the general public These visits are carried out on behalf of the people interested and to a large extent they are proposed by the Archive itself, which encourages entities and collectives who might have overlooked the resources available.

The way in which the content is shown is fundamental to reaching out to the non-researching public. The programme of activities of diffusion and cultural action (for example, exhibitions, visits, conferences, open debates and publications) is one useful strategy for activating the contents and connecting with the concerns of a non-specialised public.

There is an increasing demand to access information through new media technologies. In this context, the website has an important role in cultural centres, given that it diffuses the institution's resources. MACBA, publishes interviews, recordings of conferences materials of diffusion and press packets via its web and RWM (Radio Web MACBA), as well as distributing other contents related to their exhibitions.

Various institutions have put in motion initiatives for distributing their archives of exhibitions online, for example the Combined Arts project of the Fundació Antoni Tàpies, which opens its historical archive and makes the digitalised documents produced by their activities available online: photographs, catalogues, press articles, restoration forms, correspondence and other documents. The project shows a clear desire and openness with regard to the objective of making the experiences known, establishing relations and facilitating research and experimentation around the activities of the institution and the work of Antoni Tàpies. This is about encouraging new readings and critical writing about the contents of the archive. http://www.fundaciotapies.org/site/spip.php?rubrique917

One of the most interesting ways to activate historical archives is through exhibitions. The project Living Archive of the Van Abbemuseum, is an example of this. They organise exhibitions in which works of art are shown together with documents from the archive that make reference to them, in an exercise of transparency on the part of the institution, thus enriching the discourse of the work of art and offering the visitor a new understanding of the dimension of the artistic event. The act of knowing how the work came to be acquired by the museum's collection helps us to reflect on the ideology of art and understand the politics of acquisition of the institution.
http://vanabbemuseum.nl/en/programme/detail/?tx_vabdisplay_pi1[ptype]=18&tx_vabdisplay_pi1[project]=544&cHash=323982266090a139a7e0f512bb283438

In order for the historical archive to reside beside current artistic practices, it is always an option to invite artists to intervene in the materials of the archive. As is well known, in the last few years curators have treated archives and libraries as works of art and they have incorporated them into their work. This possibility permits the rereading of the contents of the archive and spurs on the creation of new exhibitions, such as the exhibition completed by artist known as 'Bob and Roberta Smith', who worked in collaboration with curator Neil Lebeter to explore the Epstein Archive in The New Art Gallery Walsall, in England. http://www.thenewartgallerywalsall.org.uk/whats-on/exhibition/bob-and-roberta-smith-the-epstein-archive

Another initiative that highlights the success of creating archives that are accessible to the public is the Archive of the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona (CCCB). This archive is located in a free space, open to the street and all digitalised content of exhibitions, debates, festivals produced by the institution can be consulted. Furthermore, the bibliographic sources that form the background of the activities of the institutions, as well as various materials about key cultural and social themes, can be accessed. www.cccb.org/ca/nostre_espai-arxiu_cccb-40735

Thus, it can be confirmed that archival documentation is no longer just for a minority elite. This is a moment characterised by maximissing the potential of archives as centres of dissemination and activation of culture. It is important to establish politics and actions that show the possibilities that the archive offers for generating knowledge, strengthening research and motivating new reflections and questions about exhibitions.

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MeLa* – European Museums in an Age of Migrations
Research Fields:

RF01: Museums & Identity in History and Contemporaneity examines the historical and contemporary relationships between museums, places and identities in Europe and the effects of migrations on museum practices.

RF02: Cultural Memory, Migrating Modernity and Museum Practices transforms the question of memory into an unfolding cultural and historical problematic, in order to promote new critical and practical perspectives.

RF03: Network of Museums, Libraries and Public Cultural Institutions investigates coordination strategies between museums, libraries and public cultural institutions in relation to European cultural and scientific heritage, migration and integration.

RF04: Curatorial and Artistic Research explores the work of artists and curators on and with issues of migration, as well as the role of museums and galleries exhibiting this work and disseminating knowledge.

RF05: Exhibition Design, Technology of Representation and Experimental Actions investigates and experiments innovative communication tools, ICT potentialities, user centred approaches, and the role of architecture and design for the contemporary museum.

RF06: Envisioning 21st Century Museum focuses on the transformation of contemporary museums and aims at identifying and eventually envisioning new museographical models, communication strategies and museum practices in relation with the contemporary chances and challenges posed by our `age of migrations'.

Partners and principal investigators:
Luca Basso Peressut (Project Coordinator), Gennaro Postiglione, Politecnico di Milano, Italy

Marco Sacco, Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, Italy

Bartomeu Marí, MACBA – Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, Spain

Fabienne Galangau Quérat, Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, France

Victoria Walsh, The Royal College of Art, United Kingdom

Perla Innocenti, University of Glasgow, United Kingdom

Jamie Allen, Jakob Bak, Copenhagen Institute of Interaction Design, Denmark

Chris Whitehead, Rhiannon Mason, Newcastle University, United Kingdom

Iain Chambers, Università degli Studi di Napoli `L'Orientale,' Italy

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