

2015

Freedom of Information Request

Reference number – 15-010

Information relating to I am writing to obtain information regarding any art owned by your organisation.

1. What is the total number of works of art owned by your organisation?
2. What is the total insurance value of these works of art?
3. How many of the works of art that you own are on public display?
4. For the five most valuable items, where the data is readily available:

a) If purchased by the organisation, what was its purchase price, year of purchase and reason for purchase

b) What is its current value?

Please make it clear if you are responding on behalf of more than one organisation.

Clarification Oil Paintings should definitely be included however this is too narrow a definition for what we are aiming for.

For the purposes of this request, I am defining work of art as a product of the fine arts, including, but not limited to, painting or sculpture. The cut of point would depend on what is appropriate for your organisation. For example, an important or valuable print reproduction should be included. However, I am not asking, and do not expect, you to count every photograph or scrap of doodle in the office.

However, if this definition of art will take you above the limits as set out in S12, please contact me and I'm sure we will find a definition that suits both my research project and the data as available in your archives.

Refer

reference no.: 15-010

30 July 2015

Dear

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION – *Information relating to art owned by our organisation.*

Thank you for your request for information. As Museum Secretary for Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales ('the Museum'), I am responsible for responding to your request for information.

I refer to your email of 8 June 2015, and subsequent clarification email of 13 July 2015, in which you asked for the following information:

08 June 2015: I am writing to obtain information regarding any art owned by your organisation.

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2. What is the total insurance value of these works of art?
3. How many of the works of art that you own are on public display?
4. For the five most valuable items, where the data is readily available:

- a) If purchased by the organisation, what was its purchase price, year of purchase and reason for purchase
- b) What is its current value?

Please make it clear if you are responding on behalf of more than one organisation.

13 July 2015: Oil Paintings should definitely be included however this is too narrow a definition for what we are aiming for.

For the purposes of this request, I am defining work of art as a product of the fine arts, including, but not limited to, painting or sculpture. The cut of point would depend on what is appropriate for your organisation. For example, an important or valuable print reproduction should be included. However, I am not asking, and do not expect, you to count every photograph or scrap of doodle in the office.

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Response

For the purposes of the Museum's response we have defined art as 'all works accessioned as part of the Museum's fine art collections, including oil paintings, sculpture, works on paper (prints, drawings, watercolours, photographs) and works in other relevant media (such as film and projected works)'.

According to this definition, the answers to the questions are:

1. What is the total number of works of art owned by your organisation?

32,490 (of which approximately 30,000 are works on paper, 1,875 oil paintings and 620 sculpture).

2. What is the total insurance value of these works of art?

Not applicable as this information is not held – the collection owned by the Museum is covered under the Government indemnity scheme and therefore insurance is not required unless an object is on loan to another venue. It is also not the policy of the Museum to value its collections as this is only required for recently acquired heritage assets.

3. How many of the works of art that you own are on public display?

This varies as displays and exhibitions across our Museums and in partner venues change, works go out on loan, galleries are temporarily closed for refurbishment / maintenance, and so on. It is also important to note that works on paper can only be displayed periodically and for short periods of time, for conservation reasons, so are usually not on display.

The most accurate figure as at 29 July 2015 is 593 on display at National Museum Cardiff, 139 on loan out for display, making a total of 732.

4. For the five most valuable items, where the data is readily available:

a) If purchased by the organisation, what was its purchase price, year of purchase and reason for purchase

Not applicable – all the most valuable works were bequeathed to the Museum, not purchased.

b) What is its current value?

At their last valuation (various dates), each painting ranged from £35,000,000 to £45,000,000.

Your request was considered according to the principles set out in the National Assembly's Code of Practice on Public Access to Information (third edition). The Code is published on the Internet at www.information.wales.gov.uk.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, you should write to the Director Finance and Corporate Resources at the following address:

Mr. Neil Wicks
Director of Finance and Corporate Resources
Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NP

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When dealing with any concerns, we will follow the principles of the National Museum of Wales's Code of Practice on Complaints, which is available on our website at www.museumwales.ac.uk/en/45/.

Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) if you are not content with the outcome of your complaint or review. Generally, the ICO will not make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Museum.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

If you have any further queries or concerns then please contact me via my email address.

Yours sincerely

Elaine Cabuts
Museum Secretary