JEAN CHARLOT COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Prepared by
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Jean Charlot Collection

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I. PROGRAM INFORMATION

Jean Charlot (1898 Paris–1979 Honolulu) was an artist, teacher, scholar, critic, poet, playwright, and natural philosopher. His output of drawings, paintings, murals, prints, cartoons, books, articles, and other writings was prodigious. His life was full of significant connections within the intellectual and political milieu of the diverse communities where he lived in France, Mexico, New York, Colorado and Hawai‘i—with artists and writers, with educational and art institutions, with the Roman Catholic Church, with indigenous and working people.

With his wife, Dorothy Zohmah Charlot (1909-2000), he nurtured students and friendships, maintained links lasting many years, and with his fine sense of history preserved many tangible records of his experience. He observed events and people precisely, and wrote frankly and succinctly, often wittily. His deep technical experience and long perspective of art ensure the currency of his art historical writing today.

In accordance with his wish to make the records of his life and work available for research and education, the Jean Charlot Collection was donated by his heirs to the University of Hawai‘i in 1981 and opened in 1983. It is an outstanding collection of artist’s papers—the artworks and documentary materials that illuminate the study of an artist’s life, significant achievements and associations. Today it attracts students and researchers from all over the world. Items from the collection have been exhibited nationally and internationally.

The initial substantial gift was a nucleus. With further significant donations from the estate of Zohmah Chalot, from family members, friends and Charlot scholars, as well as a small acquisition fund provided by the Library, it continues to grow. Also in keeping with Charlot’s vision, the Archive of Hawai‘i Artists has been established with the acquisition of the Juliette May Fraser/David Asherman Papers, selected prints of John Melville Kelly, and materials relating to Madge Tennent, Isami Doi, the Image Foundation, and others.

The major components of the collection are: books and journals (but no live subscriptions); artworks by Jean Charlot: works by other artists; archives and manuscripts; audiovisual materials, and personal and family memorabilia. Acquisitions may relate to any one of these components.
II. COORDINATION OF COLLECTING RESPONSIBILITIES

Collecting responsibilities are coordinated by the Curator.

The Curator consults colleagues at this Library, and other relevant collections and institutions in Hawaii to develop the holdings, especially the Archive of Hawaii Artists, to avoid unnecessary overlap with collections held elsewhere.

Duplicates of works already held in other Hamilton Library collections are not generally acquired unless they have a special “association value” or a significant portion of their content is relevant to the specific interests of the Collection.

Very occasionally the Curator may ask a subject selector to acquire a copy of a publication of important but peripheral interest to the Charlot Collection or to duplicate a title already in the Collection if it is known to be in demand and should be available for general circulation.

Also very occasionally, the Curator may arrange for a rare or highly relevant title to be transferred from a circulating collection to the Charlot Collection.

The Curator occasionally seeks information and opinions from Charlot scholars, especially John Charlot and researchers who visit the Collection.

III. GUIDELINES FOR MATERIALS COLLECTED OR EXCLUDED

1. Scope

To consolidate existing strengths and promote future research, materials with a demonstrated relevance to existing holdings, or those that otherwise relate to Jean Charlot’s culturally and geographically diverse life and interests or exemplify his achievements are acquired. Those specifically relating to Charlot are collected comprehensively; materials relating to others are acquired selectively. Holdings elsewhere in the UH system are taken into account and duplication is more an exception than routine.

Collection strengths include the art of Mexico from the pre-Hispanic period to the 20th century, Christian liturgical art, prints and print making, mural painting especially frescoes, book illustration, exhibition catalogs especially for Mexican artists, and materials by and about Charlot’s friend, Paul Claudel. Many of the books and journal issues are rare imprints, limited editions, and/or autographed copies, or rarely preserved valuable printed ephemera.

- Materials in all media are acquired. Note that microforms and some audiovisual items acquired for the Collection may be cataloged and housed in other collections within
the Library where equipment is available for their use. In particular, theses and exhibition catalogues that discuss Charlot’s influence or show his work held in other collections are sought.

- There are no restrictions on language, chronological or geographic coverage, or imprint date. Most materials held are imprints from the United States, France or Mexico, dating to the 19th and 20th centuries. Beside English, significant parts of the Collection are in French or Spanish. A small number of items are in Hawaiian or Náhuatl, both languages that Charlot wrote and spoke.

- There are no restrictions on level of readership or physical or intellectual quality. Illustrated children’s books are an important element in the book and journal collection. Miscellaneous nineteenth century books that were significant in Charlot’s childhood and early artistic development are held, as well as books that he collected for their cover designs not their content.

- At least two copies of Charlot’s major publications and illustrated books are held, as well as every revised printing, different edition and translation. Duplicate copies beyond this number are kept in reserve. At least one copy of his other published writings is held; duplicate copies are acquired where possible. The Curator actively fills gaps in the holdings of second copies, especially those considered rare.

- Secondhand copies or photocopies are accepted where new or original copies cannot be obtained.

- Original artworks by Charlot and others are accepted (especially original drawings, prints and photographs as well as sketchbooks and stages of works in progress, and ephemera).

- Diverse archival and manuscript materials relating to Charlot’s personal and professional activities, and family life as well as Charlot family members—both ancestors and descendents—may be accepted, including clippings and ephemera.

- Materials and artworks that identify people whose lives and works were a source of influence on Charlot are collected selectively.

- Technical publications relating to techniques that Charlot employed, such as fresco painting or printmaking, are acquired selectively.

- Desk copies and working tools are acquired and updated as needed for the use of the Curator and interns concerning such topics as archival management and preservation.

In all cases, the Curator exercises discretion, and may choose not to accept items because of physical condition beyond repair and usability, or lack of relevance to the focus of the Collection. In general, material is not withdrawn or culled although
certain obsolete and acidic mounting and housing materials may be removed in the process of preservation.

2. **Gifts**

Growth of the Collection occurs mainly from receipt of relevant solicited and unsolicited gifts. The Curator establishes and maintains contacts with new and known donors. Most gifts are donated by the Charlot family and friends—a sporadic but continuing process as members of the family and the Jean Charlot Foundation continue to maintain a strong interest.

Scholars actively using the Collection for their research, and writers and publishers printing Charlot images with the permission of the Jean Charlot Estate, LLC, are routinely asked to deposit their work for the record.

The Collection is a focal point for researchers unable to visit Hawaii but are served at long-distance by the Collection. As a result of their research, they sometimes offer new information to be preserved, to share with others, or to update what we already know. They send their material in the form of digital images or other kinds of photographs, and copies of papers, articles, theses, and conference proceedings.

3. **Purchases**

The Curator uses the small annual allotment from the Library’s materials funds ($800 in 2005-6) to support extensive efforts to fill known gaps and seek out new books, theses, articles, catalogs and other writings within scope. Funds may also be expended to gather and copy archival and rare materials held in other libraries and archives, and photographs of Charlot works not already documented. Original but relatively inexpensive art works by Charlot or others with a Charlot connection may be purchased occasionally.

Materials are purchased through all available sources, including the Library’s major vendors, antiquarian and secondhand book dealers, online vendors such as abebooks.com, alibris.com and ebay.com. By informal arrangement, Friends of the Library of Hawaii set aside for the Curator’s review Charlot-related books received for their annual book sale.

The Curator seeks additional funds for acquisition (and other important projects) through financial donations from individuals and grants. A small reserve is held in the Jean Charlot Collection Enrichment Fund at the University of Hawaii Foundation.

4. **Information from Internet resources**

While not subscribing to any online resources or services, the Curator uses the Internet as an important source of information for the collection. For example, she checks relevant web sites and samples or compiles ephemeral references to Jean
Charlot (e.g. sales and auction data showing the movement of Charlot-related art works on the open market). Information about owners of Charlot works, both institutions and private collectors, as well as exhibitions is also compiled from the Internet on an on-going basis to up-date existing manual information files.

IV. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

You mean, could do tons more but not enough money, not enough space, not enough help, not enough time?