

Care and treatment of loaned artworks

Environmental conditions

All works of art require particular conditions for display, and the Tate collection includes many objects with complex or unusual display and/or environmental requirements. Every prospective borrowing institution is required to complete a UK Registrars Group Facilities Report, providing information about facilities at the loan venue. In the case of a touring exhibition all venues will be asked to complete a Facilities Report.

All prospective borrowers are expected to be equipped to continuously record temperature and relative humidity for each separate exhibition space, and should also possess an illuminance meter for monitoring lux and UV units. Full records of the temperature, relative humidity and illuminance during the relevant period of previous years will be required.

The borrower will be notified of any specific conditions for individual works of art, and will be required to submit to Tate details of how it is proposed to meet these requirements before loan may proceed.

Tate reserves the right to request the installation of automatic monitoring equipment in the display space where Tate works are being displayed and to receive copies of environmental records at the end of the loan period. Air conditioning systems should be in operation 24 hours a day and should not be turned off until the works concerned have left the conditioned area – even if the works have been cased.

Standard environmental requirements

The following notes are provided as a guide to the standard environmental requirements for certain classes of works of art. Sometimes more stringent requirements may have to be imposed but very often Tate is prepared to accept lesser standards of environmental control, especially when the borrowing institution can demonstrate by submitted records that its environmental conditions are known.

Lighting

Daylight may be used for the illumination of most classes of works of art in Tate's Collection, provided that it is controlled by curtains, blinds or other sunscreens so that the average illuminance is no more than 200 lux during the hours of public display. Curtains or blinds should be closed when the exhibition is closed to the public. Direct sunlight must always be excluded from the display zone and preferably from the exhibition rooms as a whole (because of the adverse effect on room temperature and humidity). The more vulnerable classes of object, such as works on paper, photographs and unprotected textiles (such as unprimed canvas) are best displayed under artificial light at no more than 50 lux (see below): daylight should be excluded.

Artificial light: when works of art are artificially lit an illuminance of no more than 200 lux is allowed. Watercolours, drawings, prints, photographs and all other works on paper, exposed canvas, or other materials particularly vulnerable to damage by light may only be illuminated at 50 lux. For all categories, a maximum illuminance of no more than 10 lux is allowed during closed periods, except for short periods for cleaning and similar routine activities.

Photographic, film and TV lighting: Tate does not allow loans to be photographed, filmed or televised. Tate's works of art must be protected from the intense lights used for these purposes when other neighbouring works of art in the exhibition are photographed or filmed.

Ultra violet light: UV radiation is a damaging and unnecessary component of daylight and of light from fluorescent and other discharge lamps. Filters should be used to effectively eliminate UV radiation i.e.: the component of radiation of wavelength shorter than 400 nm (i.e. ultraviolet radiation) must be less than 35 microwatts per lumen of total visible radiation.

Climate

Tate recently endorsed the Guiding Principles and Interim Guidelines of the International Bizot Group.

Temperature control: the range is 18-24 degrees Celsius, 21 degrees Celsius +/- 3.

Relative humidity: the range of 40-60 per cent, 50 per cent +/- 10 with a maximum cumulative fluctuation of 10 per cent in any 24-hour period.

Atmospheric pollution: works of art should not be exposed to concentrations of sulphur dioxide in excess of ten micrograms per cubic metre, of nitrogen oxides in excess of ten micrograms per cubic metre, or ozone in excess of two micrograms per cubic metre. In areas of heavy pollution, active measures must be taken to exclude or reduce levels of gaseous pollution. A high standard of dust filtration is required when a mechanical ventilation system is employed.

General: works of art must never be placed in close proximity to sources of heat, cold or strong air-currents (radiators, fireplaces, dehumidifiers, air-conditioning outlets or intakes).

Display

Whenever possible loaned paintings are **glazed** with low reflecting glass. Usually this is already fitted to the work. If this is inappropriate or there is no provision for glazing, the work is loaned unglazed. Low reflecting glass should be cleaned with care, only with non abrasive materials to prevent scratching and damage to a gilt frame. Works must not be unglazed or removed from their display frames under any circumstances without prior consultation and permission from the Director of Tate.

Framed works of art must be securely fastened to the wall at three points using mirror plates and screws, or alternatively two Tate fittings. Small objects should be displayed in locked showcases or, under fixed glass or acrylic covers, as specified by Tate. Larger sculptures may require plinths and barriers. Unglazed paintings must also be displayed behind a barrier. Works which are difficult to install or particularly fragile may have to be installed by Tate staff as a condition of loan, at the borrower's expense.

In the case of heavy, large, awkward objects, or works demanding special **handling requirements**, Tate will require information about handling equipment, floor loadings, access routes and their dimensions and availability of trained staff.

Handling

Except for packing and installation, works of art may not be handled. Works should only be handled by trained gallery/museum staff and recognised fine art packers and shippers.

Unframed works or paintings with decorative and vulnerable frames may be fitted into a transit frame before departure from Tate. They should not be removed from the transit frame until the moment of installation.

Works may not be unframed or have their backboards or glazing removed without permission from Tate.

Works of art may not be subjected to any form of scientific examination, neither may any conservation treatment be undertaken nor any alteration to the glazing or framing be made without permission from Tate's Loans Registrar.

Credit

Loans from Tate must be credited 'Tate:' followed by the mode and date of acquisition (details will be provided by Tate). This applies in all cases where credit lines are listed, including exhibition catalogues, online material and exhibition signage. Please note that specific wording will be required in relation to reproductions of works of art.