after:hours Centre for Languages, Culture and Communication

**Course Descriptor**

**Course Title:** Collecting Photographs

**Type of Course:** Adult Education

**Credit:** Not credit bearing

**Weekly Session Titles and Descriptions**

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| Week | Session Title | Description |
| 1 | **An Introduction to collecting photographs (or where to begin)** | We start by considering what it actually means to collect photographs in a world where there are many different forms of photography – from early cyanotype and daguerreotypes, to more familiar wet-room photography and recent developments in digital photography. In part we will think about what is a photograph and what is the status (or possibly uniqueness) of any one photographic print. |
| 2 | **Museum Collecting** | In this session we will look at how museum navigate the potential issues associated in collecting photographs, what types of collections they seek to create, where they obtain works for their collections, how they store and display them and how they interpret them for the public. |
| 3 | **Private Collecting** | In this session we will look at how private collectors build up their collections, seeing this in parallel to the policies and practises of museum collections, but also as very distinct from it. The specificity and “personal interest” of the private collector might have more bearing on private collecting practice, as well as storage and budget issues. |
| 4 | **Auction Houses** | In this session we will begin to consider where both museum and private collectors of photographs obtain their photograph works by looking at the specific example of an auction house photographic sale. If possible we will visit an auction house during a photographic pre-sale display, but even if that is not possible we will consider and discuss the processes auction houses go through to obtain, validate and sell photographic works and what a potential buyer can do to get the most benefit from this system. |
| 5 | **Photography Dealers** | Continuing with the question as to how to build up a photographic collection, we will move onto looking at how specialist photography dealers, including dealers in both historic and contemporary photographs, obtain, validate and sell photographic works, and how a potential buyer can engage with this, both as a causal buyer and as someone who might build up beneficial contacts with photographic dealers to help build their collections and increase their knowledge of the subject.  |

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| Course OverviewThere are many reasons people choose to collect works of art - maybe for the pleasure of possessing beautiful and interesting things, or the desire to hold onto a piece of history, or even for the simple joy of collecting.Others might collect in the hope that values will rise, and other still might just want something attractive to hang on their living-room wall.In this short course we will be introduced to collecting photography. Collecting photographic images is an accessible way to build up an art collection, and photography is an art form that many of us will relate to in a very immediate an instinctive way.With his many years of experience, both as a collector and a seller of photographic and other forms of art, James will guide us in exploring the various different aspects of collecting photographic images, from judging the quality of photographs to finding out where to buy them.As well as drawing on the experience of building up his own collection, on the course we will visit many of the key players in the art-photography market in London, gaining access through James's contacts, built up over many years buying and selling photographic prints. We will also visit museums, other private collectors, a specialist photography dealer and an auction house specialising in photography.The course is suitable for new collectors, and experienced collectors and those interested in collecting more generally, perhaps with a view to entering the gallery or museum profession.Required Previous Experience (if any)No previous experience is necessary.Required Reading Material or Special Equipment Needed (if any)* None specified

Learning OutcomesAt the end of this course you should be able1. To understand the nature and differences between different types of photographic collections
2. to engage with aspects of the buying and selling processes of photographic collecting
3. to identify some of your own interests that might go towards you creating an aesthetically interesting and intellectually coherent photographic collection of your own.

**Possible Further Study**Further courses on the after:hours programme might be useful to you.Additional informationThis course descriptor may be subject to change during the delivery of the course, depending on the specific direction and nature of the learner cohort, and is intended to be responsive to the group dynamics as they emerge during the delivery of the course. |