

Yale University
Committee on Art in Public Spaces (CAPS)
Guidelines and Procedures

November 6, 2025

I. Introduction

The art displayed in Yale’s public spaces supports the University’s [mission](#). Public art is a fundamental component of Yale’s campus community, contributing to the University’s environment for education and scholarship, creating spaces that stimulate thought and reflection, encouraging the free exchange of ideas, and providing access to art for all members of the campus community, New Haven, and beyond. It is a necessity in educating students to improve the world today and for future generations.

This document details the process by which the University acquires, maintains, and exhibits art in public spaces, which are those areas, indoors and outdoors, to which the University community generally has access- “public spaces.”

II. The Committee on Art in Public Spaces (CAPS)

The primary responsibility of the Committee on Art in Public Spaces (CAPS) is to advise the University president about the acquisition of works of art exhibited in Yale’s public spaces (public art), separate from art on view at the University’s museums, libraries, and schools.

Committee members include representatives from the University’s Faculty of Arts and Sciences, professional schools, Office of Facilities, administration, residential colleges, and collecting institutions.

Given this wide expertise, the committee is also uniquely qualified to provide guidance and to serve as a resource for all members of the campus community in matters relating to public art. The committee invites inquiry from all campus constituencies considering the acquisition or exhibition, including temporary installations, of public art.

Committee members are appointed annually by the University president and meet throughout the academic year. Subcommittees may be formed and procedures reconsidered as needed.

III. Scope

Public art includes sculptures, paintings, murals, and selected architectural elements in public spaces on the Yale University campus. Architectural elements include stained and decorative glass, relief sculptures, gargoyles, fountains, and gates.

Works of public art are part of the University’s Permanent Collections of Cultural Property and as such are subject to [Policy 8000](#) regarding the acceptance, acquisition, accession, and deaccession of items of cultural property. They are accessioned objects of the [Campus Art Collection](#), or another of Yale’s collecting institutions. Yale’s collecting institutions include the Yale University Art Gallery, the Yale Center for British Art, the Peabody Museum of

Natural History at Yale University, the Yale University Library, the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the Lillian Goldman Law Library, and the Morris Steinert Collection of Musical Instruments.

IV. Acquisitions

Public art is acquired by purchase, commission, and/or donation. CAPS reviews, assesses, and makes recommendations to the University president regarding the acquisition of public art.

Potential acquisitions of public art will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Will the acquisition support the Mission Statement of Yale University?
- Will the acquisition aesthetically complement or enhance the location where it is proposed to be installed?
- What impact would the acquisition have on the space in which it would be located, and on the people who use and interact with the space?
- Does the acquisition possess a high quality of artistic merit that would be beneficial to the Yale community?
- What are the materials of the acquisition, and do the materials and construction methods ensure longevity?
- Are there safety, regulatory or operational impacts related to the proposed acquisition or issues related to the intended site?
- Does the acquisition offer opportunities for engagement, discussion, and the free exchange of ideas for the Yale and New Haven community?
- Have funding sources for the costs of acquisition, construction/fabrication, installation, signage, care, maintenance, and conservation, been considered and, when possible, identified?
- Has satisfactory provenance documentation been provided.

V. Procedures for Donating Public Art

Those interested in donating public art to Yale will submit a written offer of donation to the chair of the Committee on Art in Public Spaces, including artist, title, dimensions, medium, materials, provenance documentation, and photographs.

The donor and CAPS must consider funding for installation, maintenance, and conservation needs.

CAPS will review the donation offer and evaluate the work of art based on the criteria outlined above.

All newly acquired public art will be accessioned into the Campus Art Collection or another of Yale's collecting institutions. Each collecting institution has its own collecting criteria and acquisition policies and procedures, which will be adhered to as part of this process.

If the donation is accepted, the donor will receive a Deed of Gift and other required documentation from the Campus Art Collection or relevant collecting institution.

Art donations are gifts-in-kind, the recording and acknowledging of gifts will be coordinated with the Office of Development, in accordance with [Policy 2200](#), Gifts to the University.

Consistent with the [Yale University Campus Signage Manual](#), Appendix b: Commemorative Plaques & Memorials, new commemorative plaques and memorials are generally not permitted on campus. Departures from this practice must be determined by the Officers of Yale University. CAPS may, at times, advise on issues pertaining to existing commemorative plaques and memorials.

VI. Procedures for Public Art Proposals and Commissions

Artists or their representatives interested in proposing a work of public art will submit a written proposal to the chair of the Committee on Art in Public Spaces. Commissions for new public art will first be submitted as a proposal to the CAPS chair.

Proposals must include the following information:

- Contact Information.
- Name of University department, unit, or individual sponsor, if applicable.
- Written description of the proposed art, including medium, materials, dimensions (length, width, height, estimated weight).
- Drawings, sketches, photographs, or models of proposed art.
- Proposed installation site(s) on the University campus.
- Installation procedures and methods.
- Artist's Statement, including how the proposed art supports the Yale University Mission Statement and how it will benefit the proposed location and the people who regularly use and interact with the space.
- Preliminary budget.
- Secured or potential funding sources.
- Maintenance and conservation plan.

VII. Conditions of Acceptance, Siting, and Installation

The final decision of acceptance and siting of public art rests with the President, as advised by CAPS, and with the relevant collecting institution.

The Campus Art Collection, or relevant collecting institution, will inform the donor, artist, or their representative of the appropriate acquisition policy and procedures.

Installation plans of public art will be reviewed by CAPS, the Office of Facilities, the relevant collecting institution, and by the campus unit or department where the public art is to be placed. The Office of Facilities will arrange the contract and facilitate the installation.

VIII. Collections Management

The Campus Art Collection, or relevant collecting institution, is responsible for the inventory, maintenance, and conservation of public art.

IX. Temporary Installations, Exhibitions and Loans

Members of the Yale community are encouraged to share plans for temporary installations, exhibitions and loans with CAPS. While such projects are generally within the remit of the individual campus unit, CAPS is able to draw upon the knowledge and expertise of its members to review plans and make recommendations for their execution.

Temporary art installations and exhibitions are intended to be on display for less than one academic year. They must not alter or cause any damage or degradation to existing landscapes or buildings and must not cause any operational impacts or physical impediments.

Those seeking guidance regarding a proposed temporary installation, exhibition or loan should submit a written summary to the chair of the Committee on Art in Public Spaces. The summary should include:

- Written description, including title, artist, medium, materials, and dimensions.
- Proposed location.
- Campus partners, especially in regard to the location.
- Installation and deinstallation procedures.
- Schedule of installation, display and deinstallation.
- Project budget and funding sources.
- Artist's Statement, including how the proposed art supports the Yale University Mission Statement and how it will benefit the proposed location and the people who regularly use and interact with the space.

X. Community Feedback

As part of making informed recommendations to the president, the Committee on Art in Public Spaces [welcomes the views of members of the university.](#)