

## YCBA Reference Library FAQs

### 1. What materials are in the YCBA Reference Library?

The YCBA Reference Library contains nearly 40,000 titles and over 120 current periodicals devoted to British art, artists, and culture from the sixteenth century to the present day. The collections include essential reference works on British artists, but also contain resources on British architecture, print and book culture, performing arts, costume, town and county histories, and travel books. We also maintain a Photograph Archive, a collection of art conservation and technical analysis materials, as well as videos and DVDs of the Center's past lectures and programs. There are three public computers available for use, as well as a copier, scanner, printer, microfilm reader, and DVD players.

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### 2. Can I use the YCBA Reference Library?

Yes, the Reference Library is open to researchers of all types: students, scholars, and the general public without an appointment. For more information on specific policies and procedures for using the Reference Library, please see our Policies and Procedures document on our [Reference Library and Archives page](#).

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### 3. How do I use the YCBA Reference Library?

The Reference Library is free and open for use. No appointment is required. Visitors can simply enter the Library on the second floor and sign in to our Guest Book.

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### 4. Can I check out books from the YCBA Ref Lib?

No. The Reference Library is a non-circulating library; however, we do have a scanner and copier located within the library for use.

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### 5. Can I use my camera or digital camera in the Reference Library?

Yes. We recommend that you do not use a flash when taking pictures of the Library. Materials in the collection can be photographed for personal use only.

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### 6. Can I scan or make copies of materials within the Reference Library?

Yes. There is a scanner/photocopier located within the Reference Library for use.

**7. What is a “Photograph Archive”? May I use it?**

The Photograph Archive is a study collection of approximately 150,000 black and white photographic reproductions of British works of art from the sixteenth to the early twentieth century and is open for use. The archive represents both public and private collections worldwide with a particular focus on collections in the United States, Canada, and Australia.

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**8. Who was Paul Mellon?**

Founder of the Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon (1907–1999) is recognized as one of the greatest art collectors and philanthropists of the twentieth century. He studied at Yale University and Clare College, Cambridge University, England. Mr. Mellon’s first art purchases were made in England during the early 1930s and he continued to purchase works of British art throughout the course of his life. In 1966 he announced his intention to provide a building, works of art, and an endowment that established the Yale Center for British Art. For more information on Paul Mellon, please visit our [Founder page](#).

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**9. Who is Louis I. Kahn?**

Louis Isadore Kahn (1901-1974) was one of the twentieth century’s most influential architects. Kahn is known for his modernist designs that span the globe including: the Salk Institute, La Jolla, California; the Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas; and the National Assembly Building in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Kahn designed the Yale University Art Gallery and the Yale Center for British Art was his last project. For further information, please visit our [Architect page](#).

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**10. Is there a list of all the exhibits that were ever held at the YCBA?**

Yes. A list of all exhibitions held at the YCBA is available at the Reference Desk in the Reference Library. Our website also provides a listing of [past exhibitions](#) from the 1990s to the present.

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**11. Does the YCBA Reference Library have information about works of art in the YCBA’s collections?**

Yes. The Reference Library’s books and journals support in-depth research of the Center’s collections. Additionally, we can provide object-specific reports and bibliographies on works of art in the collection.

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**12. Can I use the YCBA Reference Library to get info on present-day British art & artists?**

Yes. There are numerous resources on contemporary British art and artists contained within our books, artist’s files, current journals, and periodical indexes and databases.

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**13. Can I use the YCBA Reference Library to conduct genealogical & biographical research?**

Yes. There is an abundance of biographical and genealogical resources in both print and digital formats available for use in the Reference Library, such as the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* and *Burke’s Peerage and Landed Gentry*.

**14. Can I use the YCBA Reference Library to conduct provenance research?**

Yes. We have a multitude of resources to assist with provenance research including: historical and contemporary auction and sales catalogs, art sales indexes, exhibition catalogues, collection catalogues, catalogues raisonnés, archival resources, collector’s resources, and many others.

**15. What sales & auction resources are available at the YCBA Reference Library?**

There are both historical and current auction and sales catalogs from Sotheby's (1734–current) and Christie's (1792–current) available in microfilm and print. We also selectively collect Bonham's, Park-Bennett, and Phillips sales catalogues. Sale information can be found in annual price indexes such as *Art Sales Index*, *Art Prices Current*, and *Print Price Annual*, as well as in electronic databases such as *ArtNet*.

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**16. Can I use the YCBA Reference Library to research and estimate the value of a work of art I own or want to buy?**

Yes. We have numerous resources in the Library to assist you with this process, such as art sales indexes, auction and sales catalogues, and art auction databases. Please note: no staff member can provide an actual appraisal or valuation for your work of art.

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**17. I need to find an appraiser. Can you help?**

Yes. We suggest contacting professional appraisal organizations, such as the [American Society of Appraisers](#), the [Appraisers Association of America](#), or the [Appraisal Foundation](#). Additionally, auction houses such as Christie's or Sotheby's can provide appraisals and valuations for a fee.

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**18. Where can I find out more about the history of the Yale Center for British Art?**

There are several books and articles that illuminate the history of the Center—[contact a librarian for a list](#). You can also consult the Institutional Archives for further information on the YCBA's institutional history. For more information, please visit our [Institutional Archive page](#).

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**19. I have a question that is not in this link.**

[Ask a Librarian](#).