Acquisition Strategy of the Museum of Fine Arts Liberec 2026–2030

Overall Concept

In the coming years, the Museum of Fine Arts Liberec will systematically strengthen its collection activities as a key pillar of its mission. The aim of the museum's acquisition strategy is to define the core pillars of acquisitions in line with the fundamental mission of being a vibrant, creative, contemporary institution. The strategy focuses on developing a high-quality, representative, and up-to-date collection that not only reflects current trends the visual arts, but also respects the historical, regional, and societal context of the Museum of Fine Arts Liberec as a heritage institution with links to national and international contexts.

The acquisition strategy rejects a linear chronology in the presentation of the collection and instead emphasises a thematic approach with proactive curatorship. The museum's exhibition and collection activities are not guided by conventional art history, but they seek to connect the past and the present through broad themes such as memory, landscape, figure, identity, ecology, materialism, language, and resistance. This opens up space for visitors to actively engage with the artworks (including the proposed acquisitions) – not as passive consumers of 'art history', but as participants in a dialogue of diverse historical and contemporary voices. The collection is understood as an open and dynamic space that allows for new interpretations and connections, rather than a static representation of canonical development.

One of the main priorities for acquisitions in the upcoming period remains the targeted expansion of the museum's holdings with works by important Czech artists from the 1980s, 1990s, and the early 21st century. This era is currently underrepresented yet vital for the development of fine arts in the Czech Republic and Central Europe. The emphasis is not only on established authors, but also on works reflecting experimental, intermedia, or fringe forms in the art of that

time. Acquisitions from this period also contribute to a conscious ‘rewriting’ of the collection and the correction of historical imbalances – such as low representation of women, authors from peripheral regions or minority groups.

Another important pillar of this strategy is the consistent support of contemporary Czech female artists, as a response to long-neglected gender disparities in the collection. The Museum of Fine Arts Liberec is aware that its holdings often do not represent the diversity of the art scene and therefore actively strives to supplement them with works reflecting environmental themes, sustainability, and the relationship between humans and nature – areas that the museum considers crucial in cultural and social discourse of the 21st century. Curatorial interpretation is understood here as a political act that, through the selection of works and their contextualization, creates not only art history but also the history of alternative voices, while institutional memory continues to naturally permeate the current collection strategy, which perceives art as part of broader cultural, social, and gender structures.

The collection of the Museum of Fine Arts Liberec has a strong foundation in graphic art and drawings, not only representing art by Czech Germans and art from the 1960s, but also in terms of art by Old Masters. This should also be reflected in the upcoming period, for example by including works of art which documents the collaboration between Czechoslovak and German artists after World War II, especially in the years 1970–1990. The aim is to supplement, professionally research, and preserve these cross-border artistic works and international relations within the Liberec collection in the long term.

The acquisition strategy must also aim to expand the holdings to include experiments on the verge of conceptual and visual art, which are unfortunately still absent.

Another important aspect of this strategy is the emphasis on curatorial work based on thematic connections between works across different eras within the existing collection. Exhibitions and displays of the Museum of Fine Arts Liberec are thematic in nature, with the aim of promoting a contemporary reading of the past and vice versa. This approach corresponds to the principles of so-called ‘radical art museology’, which rejects the traditional model of the ‘silent museum’ and instead aims to create projects with participatory, performative,

documentary, and video art elements, including interventions in exhibitions, therefore rewriting the traditional idea of 'the museum as a temple of art'. The Museum of Fine Arts Liberec does not shy away from creating exhibitions co-curated with various groups – such as schools and the elderly – and incorporating the 'visitors' voices' into the exhibitions. In this way, the institution opens itself up as a cultural platform that appeals not only to professionals but also to a wide range of audiences with diverse experiences and perspectives.

In terms of geography, the museum is open to cross-border collaboration, primarily within the regional triangle of Czechia, Germany, and Poland, while also striving to place its collection within a broader European and global context. Special attention is dedicated to the countries of Central and Central-Eastern Europe, especially to art created after 2000, where new trends are emerging in response to crises, identity, climate change, and cultural transformations. It thus continues the tradition of important symposia held in the museum's garden and the Botanical Garden in 1964, the Austrian Symposium in 1965 or Slovak Sculpture in 1966, and Sculpture and the City in 1969. In line with the conceptual and thematic plan of the Museum of Fine Arts Liberec exhibitions, the museum strives to ensure that this historically valuable line of collaboration and international dialogue is also reflected in future acquisitions. These newly acquired works are intended for the planned garden of the museum, where they will further develop its cultural and professional potential in the context of the symposia tradition.

The acquisition of contemporary art is understood as a tool of cultural diplomacy, education, and critical thinking. Emphasis is placed on works that, in addition to their aesthetic qualities, also offer a sensitive view of the contemporary world – responding to war, environmental crises, migration, the transformation of public space, and other pressing issues of today. The collection includes not only classical works, but also ephemeral forms: documentation of performances, designs and sketches of unimplemented projects, community projects, and environmental interventions. The museum therefore embraces a broader concept of visual culture that transcends the boundaries of traditional art and includes milestones of popular culture and collective experience.

To summarise, the Museum of Fine Arts Liberec defines the collection not as an encyclopaedia of the development of Czech art, but as a space for critical dialogue between generations, themes,

media, and audiences. It fills in the gaps in the holdings or their underrepresented periods with enthusiasm so that the works can be used in an active dialogue with other artworks, whether as a part of the presentation of permanent collections or short-term exhibitions. Therefore, the pursuit of environmental sustainability is also an integral part of the acquisition strategy.

The Museum of Fine Arts Liberec recognises the importance of documenting the latest developments in the understanding of the artistic process among the youngest generation of artists. It will therefore also focus on purchasing works of art by students and recent graduates of art colleges (and, in the case of exceptional talent, secondary art schools) with the aim of evaluating the works over the coming years – a risky but essential strategy. The museum's acquisition strategy creates a framework for an institution that is bold, inclusive, engaged, and timely.

Acquisition Strategy of the Museum of Fine Arts Liberec: Comprehensive Overview

Internal Overview

The Museum of Fine Arts Liberec will continue to develop its collection activities as a key pillar of its mission in the coming period. The aim is to build a high-quality, up-to-date, and representative collection that will not only reflect current artistic trends but also respect the historical and regional context of the museum as a heritage institution with links to national and international cultural infrastructures.

Main directions and priorities

1. Thematic approach instead of chronology
The Museum of Fine Arts Liberec rejects a linear interpretation of the history of art. The collection and exhibitions are based on a thematic and curatorially proactive approach that connects the past with the present and allows audiences to actively engage with the collection which is not presented as an encyclopaedia but as a space for critical dialogue.

2. Additions to the 1980–2010 period
This era is underrepresented in the current holdings of the museum. The aim is to supplement the works of key authors, including experimental and intermedia works, with a special focus on the Czech Republic and our Liberec region. Special emphasis is placed on female artists from this generation as well as art collectives.

3. Addition of highlights to the collection
The museum's collections consist of several significant groups of Central European importance. These include Dutch art by the so-called Little Masters, French art from the pre-Impressionist period and the Barbizon School, German, Austrian, and Czech art from the 19th century, and art by Czech Germans. It is desirable to further expand these convolutes with works by artists who are not yet represented in these sections and who illustrate the most important trends in these chapters of art history.

4. Achieving gender equality

The Museum of Fine Arts Liberec is intentionally expanding its collections and exhibitions to include female artists, regional practitioners, and other artists whose work has historically been underrepresented.

5. Curating as active interpretation

The selection of works, as well as the way they are presented and interpreted, is understood as a political act with social implications. The Museum of Fine Arts Liberec emphasises topics such as ecology, migration, identity, and marginality. Exhibitions strive to transcend traditional formats; they include performances, temporary interventions, participatory works. These activities also generate materials that are included in the institution's collection fund.

6. Cross-border and international scope

This strategy envisages expanding the collection through cross-border collaboration within the Czechia–Germany–Poland cultural triangle and participation in international networks (V4, Europe, Global South). Special attention is given to art from Central and Eastern Europe after 2000.

7. Expanded perspective on contemporary art

Contemporary art is understood broadly as part of visual culture and social practice. The collection fund includes not only traditional media but also documentation of performances, environmental projects, community activities, and works on the verge of art and popular culture.

8. Sustainability of the acquisition strategy

The purchase of contemporary art provides significant support for living artists. However, such acquisitions must be strategically managed to ensure the museum’s sustainable operation and the care of its collections, which should be cultivated into an attractive collection fund.

Thematic areas of the Modern and Contemporary Art collection

1. Czech visual art from 1970 to 2000
2. Regional art (Northern Bohemia) after 1989 and works connected with the activities of Czech Germans
3. Central and Eastern European art after 2000
4. Collection of moving images and new media (video, sound, performance)
5. Young contemporary art, contemporary art by art school graduates and fringe forms of visual arts

Thematic areas of the Old Art collection

1. Czech fine art of the 19th century
2. Regional works by Czech Germans from the second half of the 19th century
3. Art of the Barbizon School
4. Dutch and Flemish art of the so-called Little Masters of the 17th and 18th centuries

This strategy will be regularly updated according to current social, artistic, and institutional challenges.