



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Art Commission
State House
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Paula Morse
Chair

Dennis A. Fiori
Mary Leen
Martin Mahoney
Beatrice Nessen

Susan Greendyke Lachevre
Art Collections Manager

Mail: State House, Room 1
Tel 617-727-1100, x 35517
Facsimile 617-727- 7700

GUIDELINES FOR FILMING IN THE
MASSACHUSETTS STATE HOUSE

The Massachusetts State House, capitol of the Commonwealth, is an architecturally significant building listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Its ceremonial spaces and adjacent areas are prime examples of late-18th century Neoclassical and late-19th century American Renaissance Revival architecture. Also housed and displayed throughout the building is the Art Collection of the Commonwealth, with objects dating back to the 1600's.

The State House is an historic building with collections comparable to those of an art museum. As custodians of the art collection, the Massachusetts Art Commission is responsible for insuring the safety of every artwork, and has developed the following rules and guidelines for filming in the building.

The Art Collections Manager shall be present during all filming to assist film crews in adherence to these guidelines.

1) Pre-production:

Scouts, location managers, etc. shall contact the Art Commission to discuss plans in order that we may determine which art objects may be affected, and may communicate any precautions or restrictions for filming in certain areas.

The Art Collections Manager must be present during at least one Tech Walk-Thru prior to filming, depending on complexity of scenes and degree to which Art Collection will be impacted. Scenes which will require significantly high light levels and/or lengthy burn time for lights should be brought to our attention, so that we may consider temperature levels and ambient heat build-up.

Crew estimates and (especially) filming schedules should be supplied and updated frequently.

2) Art/Set Dressing:

- a. All art objects should be considered permanently installed. Objects from the collection are not available for miscellaneous set decorating purposes. Application for use of a specific object may be submitted for consideration.

- b. Art objects may only be removed by the Art Collections Manager. Please note the eight-foot rule described under “equipment” that may require the removal of large numbers of objects, especially paintings. Depending on number of objects affected, and filming schedule, the Art Commission may request additional art handlers be provided by the film company to assist in preparation for a scene.
- c. Set decorators are invited to substitute their own paintings, but should consult with the Art Collections Manager regarding hardware requirements for installation.
- d. Please consult with the Art Collections Manager regarding masking or other treatment of permanently installed objects - plaques, statues, murals - that may not be appropriate for period or site-specific scenes.

3) Filming

A. Equipment: Load-In/Load-Out/Filming

- a) All crews should be reminded to exercise caution when moving carts and equipment through the building. Crews must pay particular attention when moving equipment about the second and third floor, where most of the art collection is installed, staying in the center of hallways so as to not brush, bump or scrape paintings or frames, plaques, murals, or architectural detail.
- b) Equipment, including planking, construction wood, piping, or other materials in excess of 8’ must be handled by two crew (one at each end) to avoid damage to art objects, walls, chandeliers, stained glass, and all carved marble, wood and iron architectural elements in the building.
- c) Crews should be reminded of the fragile nature of marble and mosaic tile floors throughout the building. Carts **MUST** be equipped with rubber tires or wheeled over planking. Cardboard planking is strongly recommended for protection of floors during transport and parking of vehicles. Advise crews not to drag cables around columns, railings, doorframes, etc. to avoid abrasion.
- d) Equipment carts may not be parked in corridors or along any wall displaying a work of art. This includes any painting, statue, wall plaque or mural.

THE 8-FOOT RULE:

- a) ALL equipment, whether parked or in use **MUST** be placed eight feet away from any art object. If a particular scene cannot accommodate the 8-foot rule, the art object must be adequately protected, or removed, prior to filming. The Art Collections Manager reserves the right to inspect and approve of all precautions taken in this regard, and may delay the filming of a scene if any object is deemed to be in harm’s way.
- b) All lighting equipment must be placed at least eight feet from any work of art. Stands should always be stabilized with sandbags. Extra crew should spot extremely tall stands. If lighting equipment must be placed within 8’, paintings will be removed from location.

B. Lighting. The Art Commission follows standard Museum guidelines for acceptable light levels around works of art. **Every effort shall be made to minimize the amount and duration of light falling on any art work.**

- a) Lights may never be aimed directly at any work of art.
- b) Camera focusing should be done with available light only.

- c) Total light falling on sculptures may not exceed 1,500 lux or 150 foot-candles. Please note that many bronze statues and plaques in the collection are coated with materials subject to embrittlement and discoloration (even melting) from abnormally high light and heat levels.
- d) Total lighting on paintings or wall murals may not exceed 150 lux or 15 foot-candles.
- e) Glare from glazed paintings or off metal surfaces should be compensated for by using available light, shooting from different angles, or with filters. Dulling films, gels, or sprays may not be applied to eliminate glare off an object. If necessary, paintings under glass will be removed from the shot.
- f) Crews should be prepared to shield permanently installed objects from light and heat build-up.
- g) Ambient temperature increases: authorized staff may ask that longer rest periods be granted if there is significant heat build-up near an object.

C. Other considerations when blocking/filming

- a) No materials, such as smoke, water and mineral spirit based vapors, including dry ice, may be introduced for atmospheric effects.
- b) Sound crew must also heed the 8' rule, and should pay particular attention to placement and movement of microphones or other sound equipment, whether suspended or on booms.
- c) Actors may not touch, lean on or otherwise come in contact with artwork during a scene. Props, such as umbrellas, briefcases, food, large hats, etc., should be carried with caution to insure against potential damage.
- d) Large cast/extra crew, when not in use, should be directed to holding areas to reduce traffic and volume in crowded halls. Please remind all cast and crew, whether working or standing by, to always be mindful of their surroundings

We sincerely appreciate your attention to these guidelines and are always available for questions at any time.

4/02

Last Rev. 1/10