

# Collection Subject Statement: Stark Media

**Last Reviewed:** February 2025

The Stark Media Collection includes films in both physical (VHS Cassette, 16mm, DVD, Blu-ray, 3D Blu-ray) and digital formats to meet the diverse needs of the University of Pittsburgh community. The collection is primarily patron-driven, supporting research and curriculum while addressing the broader research and teaching needs. The collection is generously supported through a donation from the Stark family. The collection is located at Hillman Library and the Thomas Blvd Library.

## Audiences/Purpose

The Stark Media Collection serves a diverse audience by reflecting the wide range of academic disciplines, cultural experiences, and creative interests represented at the University of Pittsburgh. The collection supports all disciplines and subject areas, with the exception of the health sciences and law. The primary audience for the Stark Media Collection includes:

1. **Students**
  - a. Undergraduate and graduate students across all disciplines who rely on media resources to support their coursework, projects, and extracurricular activities.
  - b. Students engaged in media production, analysis, or critique, for whom access to diverse and high-quality films is essential.
2. **Faculty and Instructors**
  - a. Faculty integrating media into their teaching to enrich course materials, facilitate discussions, and provide diverse perspectives on subjects.
  - b. Researchers and educators using films as primary sources or illustrative tools to support scholarly and creative endeavors.
3. **Researchers**
  - a. University of Pittsburgh-affiliated researchers conducting studies in areas such as film studies, cultural history, or media production.
  - b. Researchers requiring specialized media, including rare or niche materials and formats.

## Guiding Principles

The Stark Media Collection is developed based on the [ULS General Collection Development Policy](#) (see: Media) and the following principles:

- **Patron-driven acquisitions:** Emphasis is placed on fulfilling specific requests from researchers, educators, and curriculum needs.
- **Addressing critical gaps:** Films may be purchased to fill significant gaps in the collection or to reflect emerging trends.
- **Broadening representation:** Efforts are made to acquire materials that spotlight underrepresented subject areas, content, creators, or perspectives.

- **Distributor Reputation:** Preference is given to reputable distributors known for delivering high-quality, reliable products.

## **Collection Scope**

The Stark Media Collection is not bound by chronological or geographical limits and is composed of films from across the history of the medium in virtually all languages. Collections of considerable breadth and strength include Eastern European, Russian and former Soviet titles and East Asian titles, including rare titles from North Korea. The Stark Media Collection also has a robust collection of European titles, including French, Italian and Spanish. Additional strengths include a broad, eclectic, and international collection of horror, documentary, and animation.

The collection includes all contemporary formats—DVD, 3D, 4K and regular Blu-ray, and streaming. Previous acquisitions include 16mm, VHS, and Laserdisc formats. When selecting formats, the preferences and needs of patrons are central to the decision-making process. If a desired film is unavailable for institutional purchase (e.g., restricted distribution), alternative options are explored.

Paper and other supplementary materials that come with the films when acquired, including booklets, posters, collectible cards, and other miscellaneous pieces of supplementary marginalia, are all maintained and included in the collection.

To ensure the collection maintains relevance, high-quality, and sustainability, the following criteria guide film acquisitions:

1. **Alignment with Curriculum and Research**
  - a. Priority is given to materials directly supporting coursework, research projects, or curriculum initiatives.
  - b. Films that enhance the library's role in fostering interdisciplinary learning are particularly valued.
2. **Cost-effectiveness and Funding Availability**
  - a. Purchases are evaluated based on the equity of price relative to the available budget.
  - b. Licenses and subscription models are assessed for long-term affordability.
3. **Technical Quality and Accessibility**
  - a. Materials must meet professional standards for visual and audio fidelity.
  - b. Digital content should be compatible with the library's hosting infrastructure and include accessible features such as captions.
4. **Sustainability of Content Hosting**
  - a. For digital materials, the library prioritizes platforms or formats that offer stable, long-term access.

## **Connections & Collaborations**

- University partners:
  - Faculty and instructors using films in research and teaching

- Film & Media Studies Department
- External partners: Stark family

**Subject Experts**

- Media Services: [uls-media@pitt.edu](mailto:uls-media@pitt.edu)
- Robin Kear, Librarian for Film & Media Studies: [rlk25@pitt.edu](mailto:rlk25@pitt.edu)