

A General Guideline for Transporting Artistic & Historic Works on Paper and Photographic Materials to Lisa Duncan, Art Conservator, LLC

Personal Delivery

- ◆ **Unframed:** Paper and photographic materials are inherently fragile and easily damaged by poor handling. If your artwork is unframed we recommend that it be transported inside a padded box or sandwiched between clean cardboard or foam-core. Under no circumstance should tape be put in direct contact with your artwork. If you have more than one item, each should be individually packed. On a rainy day consider wrapping the box or sandwiched boards in plastic. **Note:** Cardboard can be used for transport, but should not be used for long term storage of your artwork.

If the object is not flat, avoid crushing it between boards and use a box. Artwork containing friable or flaking media like pastel should be transported in a box and not sandwiched between boards. All boxes should be large enough to accommodate the artwork. If the box is too large, additional padding should be used to restrict movement. When transporting artwork, do not bring pets with you.

- ◆ **Framed:** Framed artwork should be properly packaged to ensure that the object arrives unharmed. Glass has the tendency to break and can damage the artwork. Ornamental frames can also be easily damaged without proper support. It is recommended that all framed artwork be transported in a box. The box should be an appropriate size for the frame and padded to fill extra room. In most circumstances, the box should be kept horizontal. If the frame is large, multiple people should move it. **Note:** Wrapping frames in towels and rope does not provide sufficient support.



An example of a cardboard or foam-core sandwich. For proper handling make sure that the boards are larger than the artwork



An example of framed artwork packaged for transport

Shipment

- ◆ **Unframed:** Unframed items should be packaged to restrict movement. Your artwork should be sandwiched between cardboard or foam-core or placed in a padded box. Under no circumstance should tape be put in direct contact with your artwork. The sandwich or box should be placed inside an additional shipping box and shipped with a tracking number.

- ◆ **Framed:** The framed artwork should be shipped inside a sturdy and padded box or strong box. It should be restricted from unnecessary movement. Shipping framed items behind glass can be risky and proper packaging is important. No artwork should be shipped without padding the glass. Padding can be any soft material, foam or bubble wrapping. The glass should be taped in a crisscross pattern or covered with a plastic packaging protection tape/film. If accidentally broken, this ensures that shattered glass pieces are held together instead of cutting the artwork. (Avoid taping the frame as removal can be difficult.) Ship all boxes with insurance and a tracking number.



Packing Supplies:

Uline Shipping Supply Specialists: www.uline.com.

General Resources:

Snyder, Jill. Caring for Your Art. Attworth Communications, Inc, 2001.

National Trust ed. The National Trust Manual of Housekeeping. Butterworth-Heinemann, 2006.

Heritage Preservation, ed. Caring for your Collections: Preserving and Protecting Your Art and Other Collectibles. New York, NY: Harry N. Abrams, Inc. 1992.

Landrey, Gregory. The Winterthur Guide to Caring for Your Collection. Winterthur, DE: Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 2000.

Long, Jane S. and Richard W. Caring for Your Family Treasures: A Concise Guide to Caring for Your Cherished Belongings. Heritage Preservation. New York, NY: Harry N. Abrams, Inc. 2000.

MacLeish, A. Bruce. The Care of Antiques and Historical Collections, 2d ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Altamira Press, 1985.

Williams, Don. Saving Stuff: How to Care for and Preserve Your Collectibles, Heirlooms, and Other Prized Possessions. New York, NY: Fireside. 2005