



Preservation of Your Art Collection

Art has become an increasingly popular investment vehicle in recent years and as with any investment, it must be protected.

While that may seem obvious to most art collectors - as many already insure their pieces - taking extra measures to conserve artwork is oftentimes overlooked.

The art world is rapidly changing. As such, conservation of artwork - while always a delicate process - is also changing due to the ever-expanding criteria of how we define art. While most people may limit "art" to paintings and sculptures, other collectibles such as textiles, musical instruments, rare artifacts and so forth also require due care.

With all art, regardless of the medium used, it is important to protect them from the elements such as excessive heat or rapidly changing humidity levels.

Protecting a collection also requires consideration of its location and physical security. Just five years ago, in the wake of Hurricane Sandy, art conservationists found themselves inundated with work as several collections were nearly destroyed due to being stored in especially vulnerable areas.

Tragedies cannot always be avoided but they can be mitigated. Making sure that the surrounding structures around a piece of art are also secure is critical.

Proper protection during storage and travel is also an important consideration. Expert art handlers and shippers are best equipped to assess how to manage the safety of transporting artworks, taking into account age, materials, type of work and framing. It is not unusual for a valuable artwork to require custom built packaging to minimize the risk of vulnerability during transport.

Many modern and contemporary pieces of art have an ephemeral quality to them - whether it is intentional or not. For some pieces, the art may be meant to be enjoyed for a limited time or under limited circumstances. Other pieces may be made from materials that were untested and collectors who are not careful may unfortunately find that investment - quite literally - is unstable.

While there may be reasons to hold a piece of art while knowing that it has a shelf life, collectors should nonetheless make sure they still understand exactly what they are investing in.

Serious collectors will want to make sure they examine the works thoroughly with an expert before acquisition, as a best practice.

During this examination, any current defects should be noted and a plan should be set for conserving the work. When the current state of the artwork is known, this is also a time to set up a preliminary plan for installation or storage and future treatments.

With early planning, art collectors can feel more confident that their collections will last and maintain - or even grow - in value over the course of generations. To discuss your unique art collection and strategies to protect these assets, contact your Anchin relationship partner or email us at info@anchin.com.



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