

Reframing the Problem: Caring for Framed Objects in Small Institutions

Jamye Jamison

Wendy Partridge

ICA Art Conservation



america's oldest regional art conservation center



Conservation



Single Item Treatment
Written Documentation
Visual Documentation

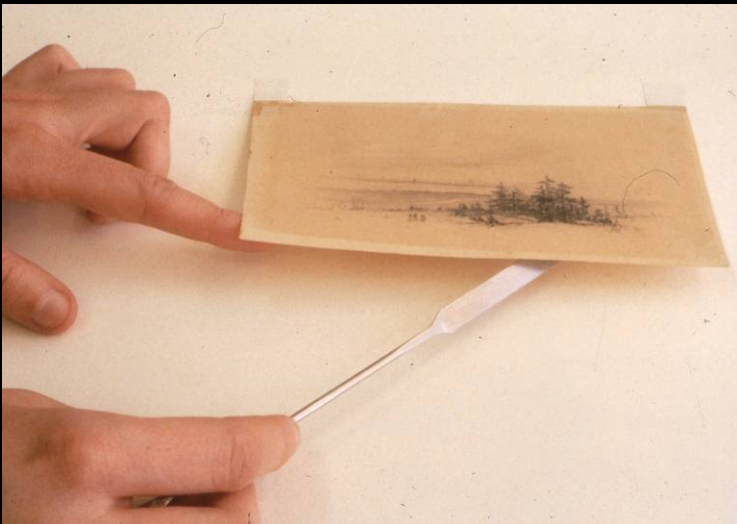


Before



After

Preservation



Handling



Environment



Storage

Why is framing important?

Because it protects your objects and allows you to get them safely on the wall



Outline of presentation

- Environment
- Storage for framed objects
- Framing works on paper
- Framing easel paintings
- Caring for frames

Any book, article, or website we discuss will be in the handouts.

Light Exposure






Filter out or block UV light
and limit light exposure



5 foot candles = 50 Lux

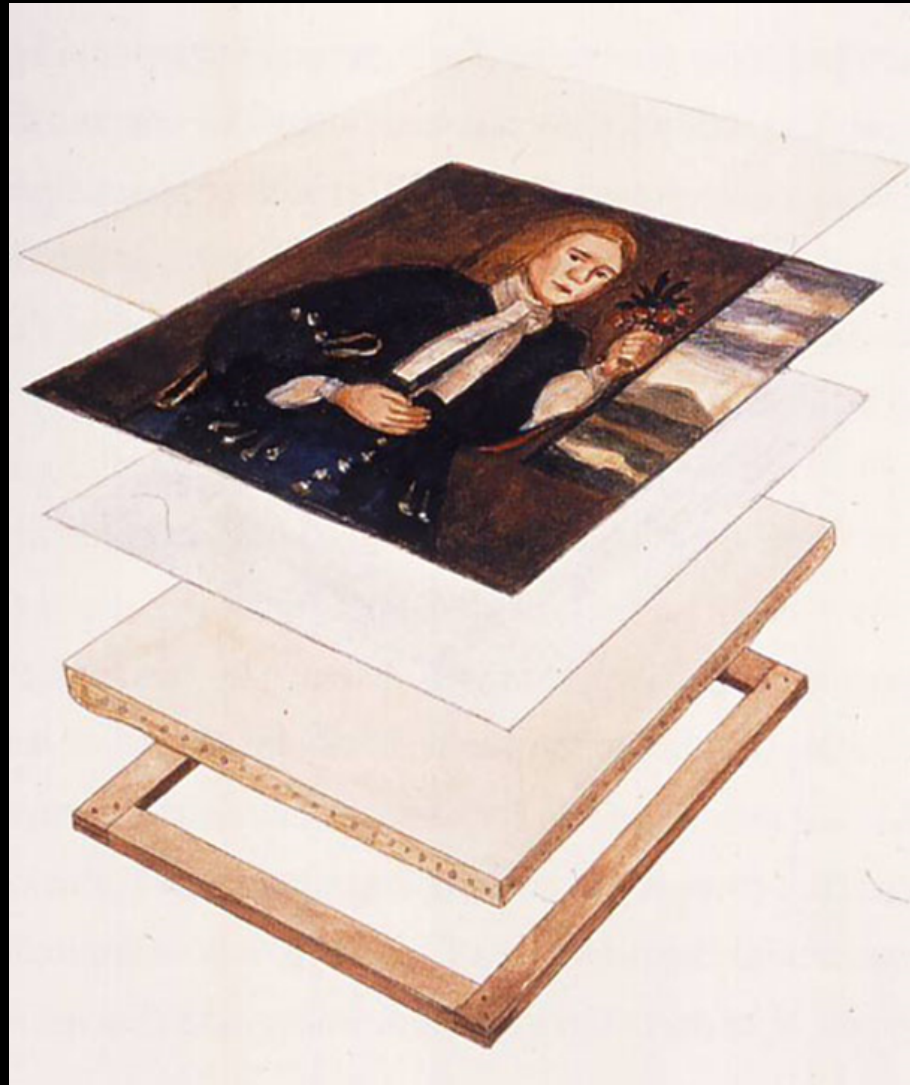
Temperature and Relative Humidity (%RH)



Date	Time	Temp	RH
4/10	11:40A	62.5	31%
4/11	10:52A	60.3	32%
4/12	10:10A	58.7	32%
4/16	1:42P	70.7	47%
	4:20P	71.6	45%
4/17	8:51A	68.0	41%
4/17	6:03A	67.5	39%



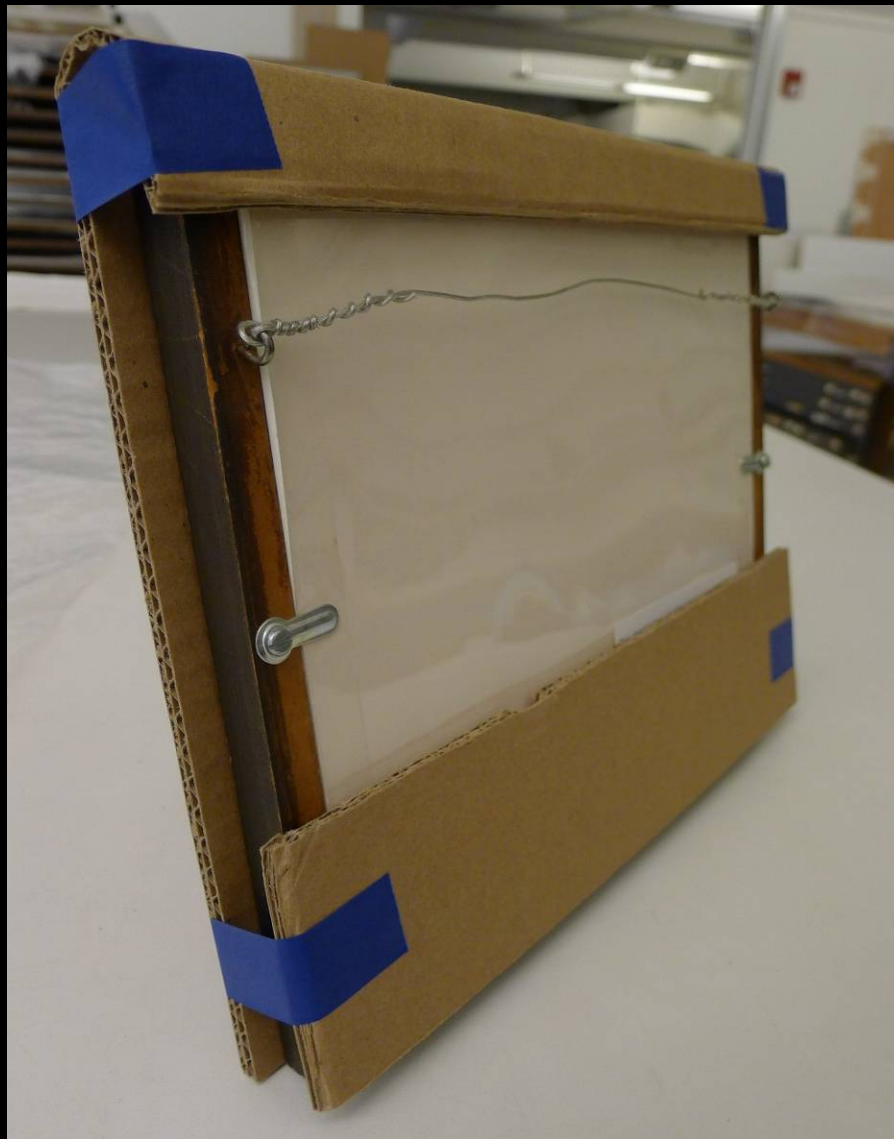
Ideal = 68-72°F & 45-55% RH
But be realistic for your space



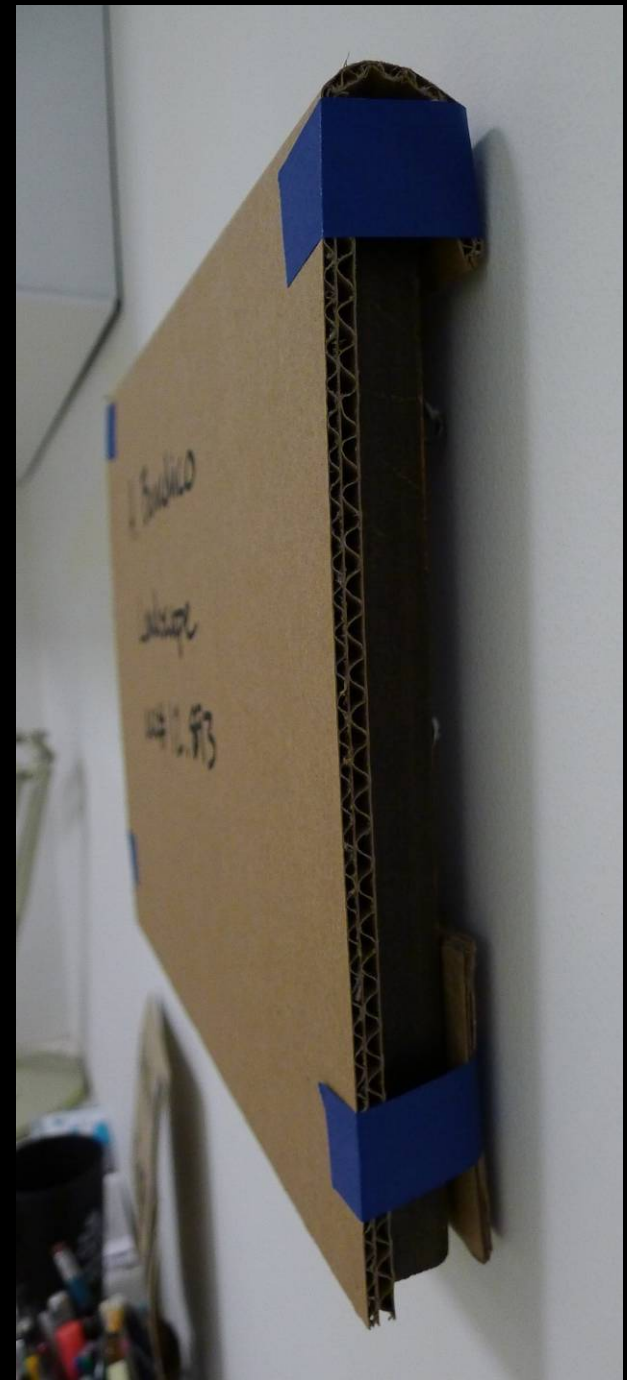
Ideal = as stable as possible; 68-72F & 45-55% RH
In reality slow, gradual transitions are acceptable



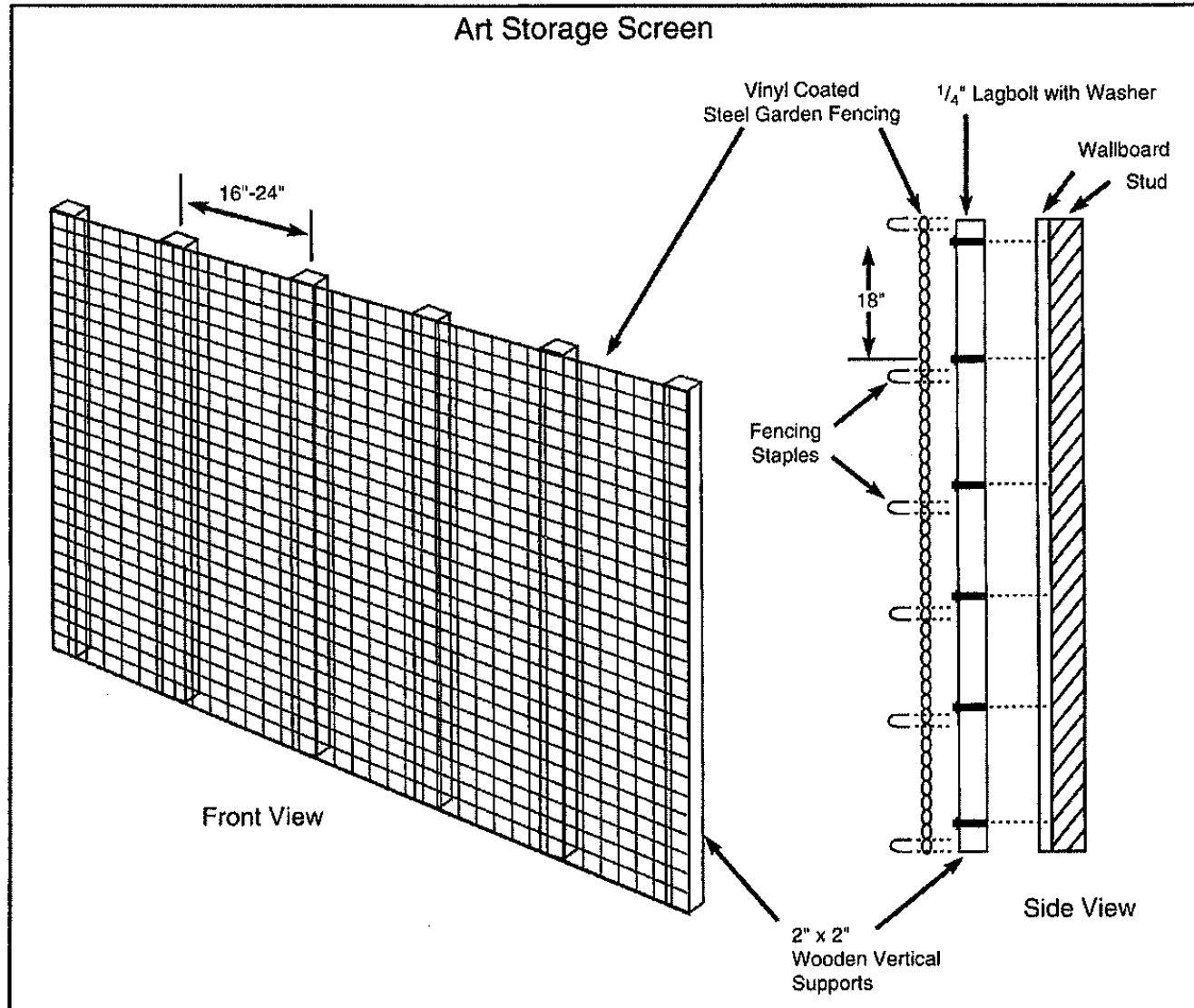
6 X 5
Months Years



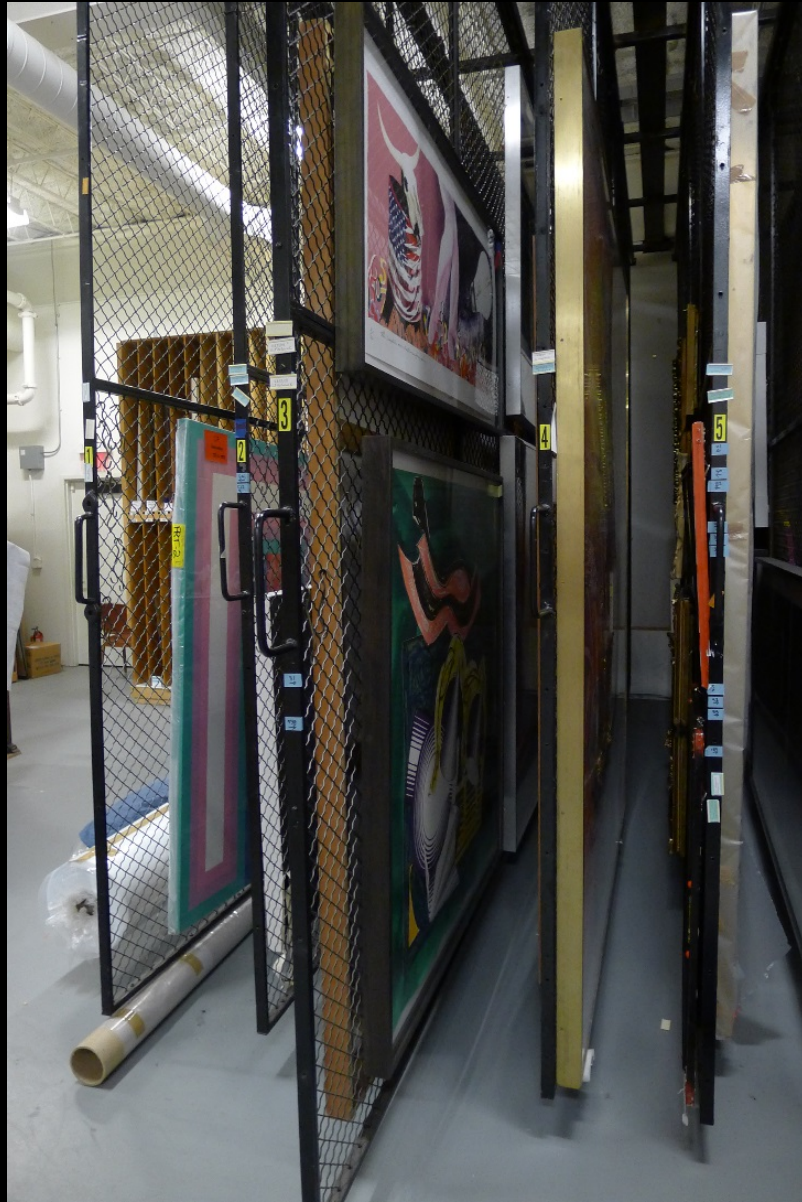
Leave wire/D-rings exposed so object can be re-hung on wall or racks



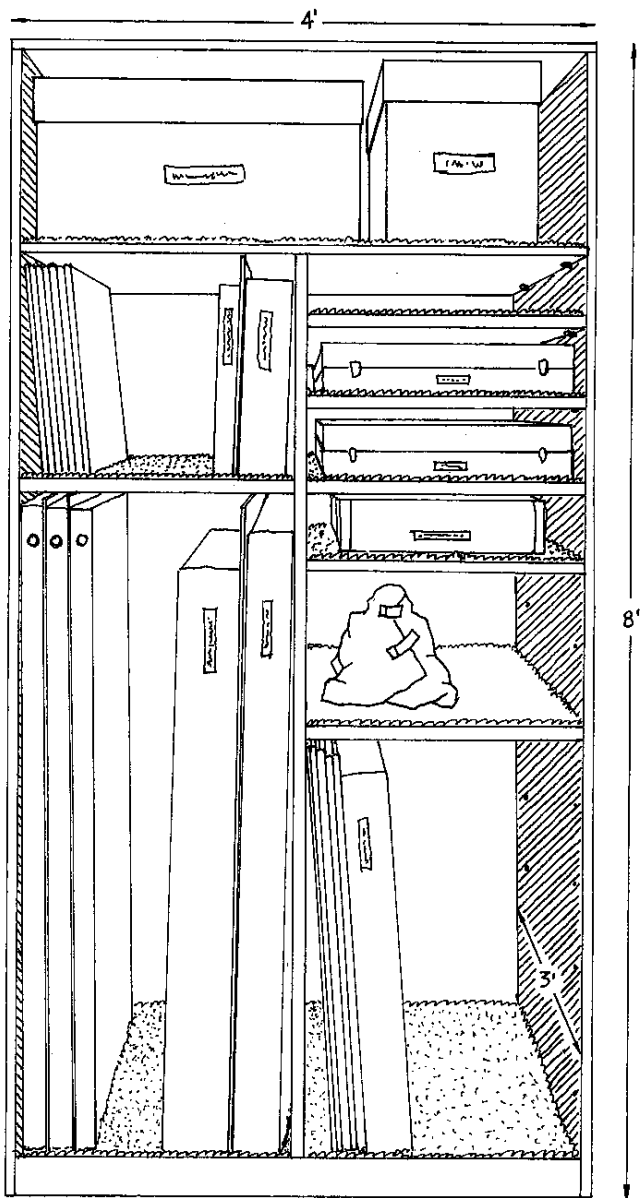
Storing Framed Objects



Rolling rack storage



Multi-Purpose Storage Shelves



Multi-purpose shelves with dividers



Why dividers are important



Framed works on paper



- Most works on paper will need to be framed for display
- Important that objects are framed properly with high quality materials
- Problems to look for and when to unframe an object
- Options for standard sized matting: Utilizing one frame for several objects

Matting and Framing



Glazing – Window Mat – Hinges – Backing boards

Object stuck to glazing
Important to have
space between

Cross section:
Glazing
Window mat
Object
Backing boards



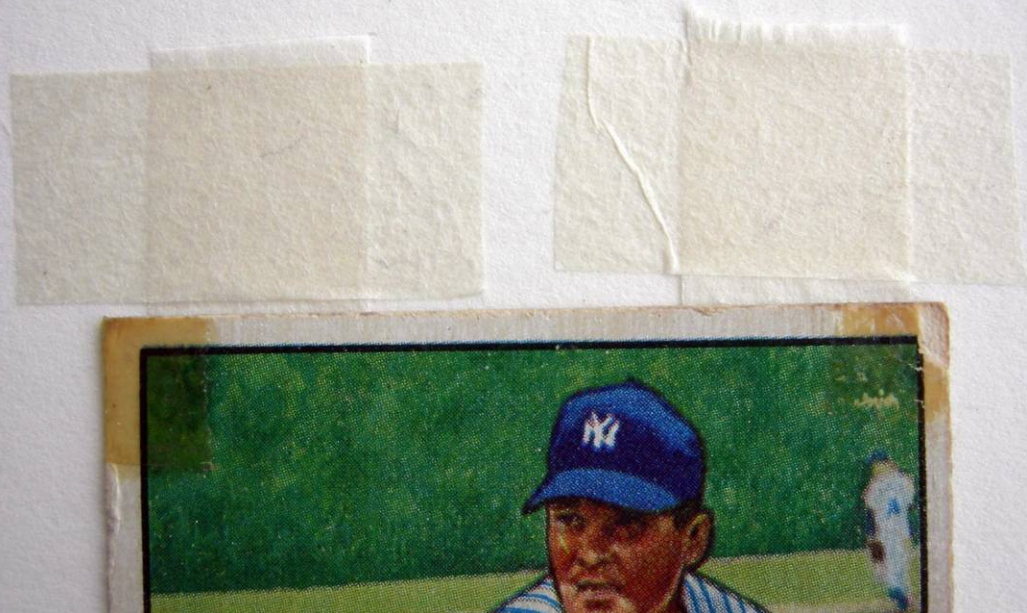


Poor Quality
Materials =
Mat Burn
Tape Stains



07/05/2

-
- **100% Cotton**
 - **Fade and Bleed Resistant**
 - **Buffered to Maintain Alkaline pH**
 - **Acid Free and Lignin Free**
-



CONSERVATION
CLEAR®

CONSERVATION
REFLECTION
CONTROL®

MUSEUM
GLASS®

NON-GLARE
GLAZING OPTION



TruGuard®
UV Protection
Sunscreen For Your Art.

Broken Glass



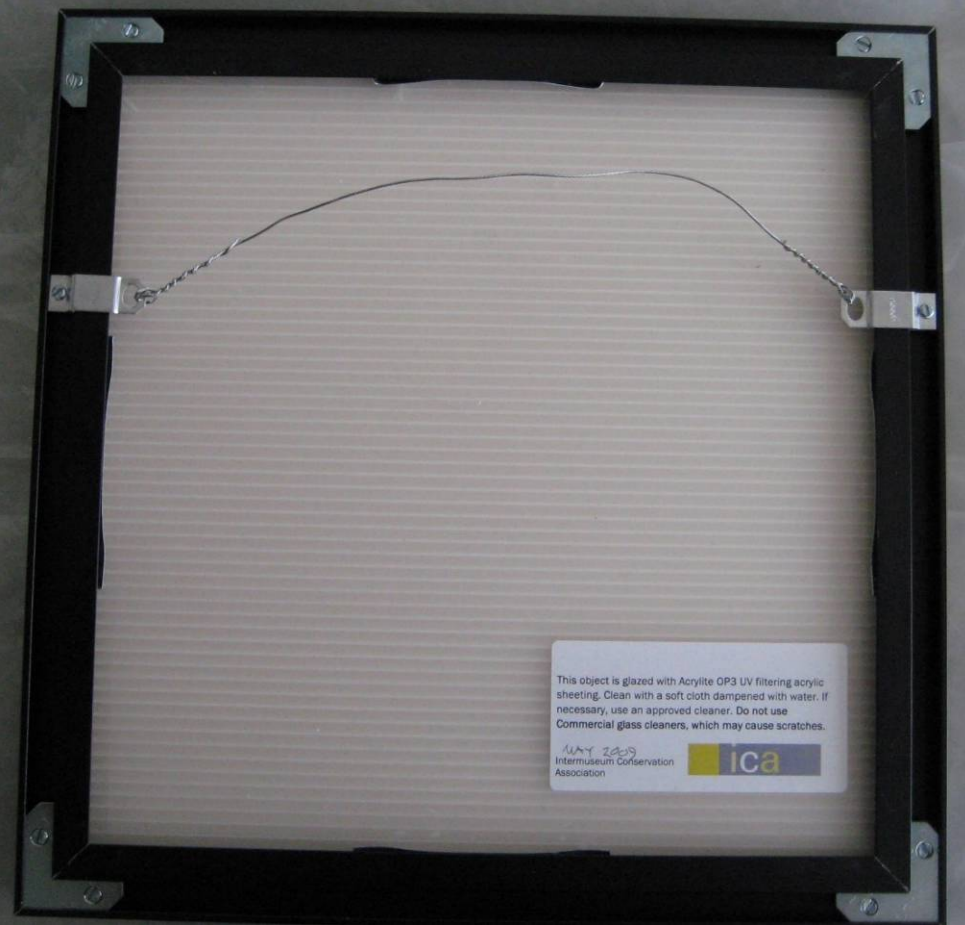
Damage to the
surface of the object





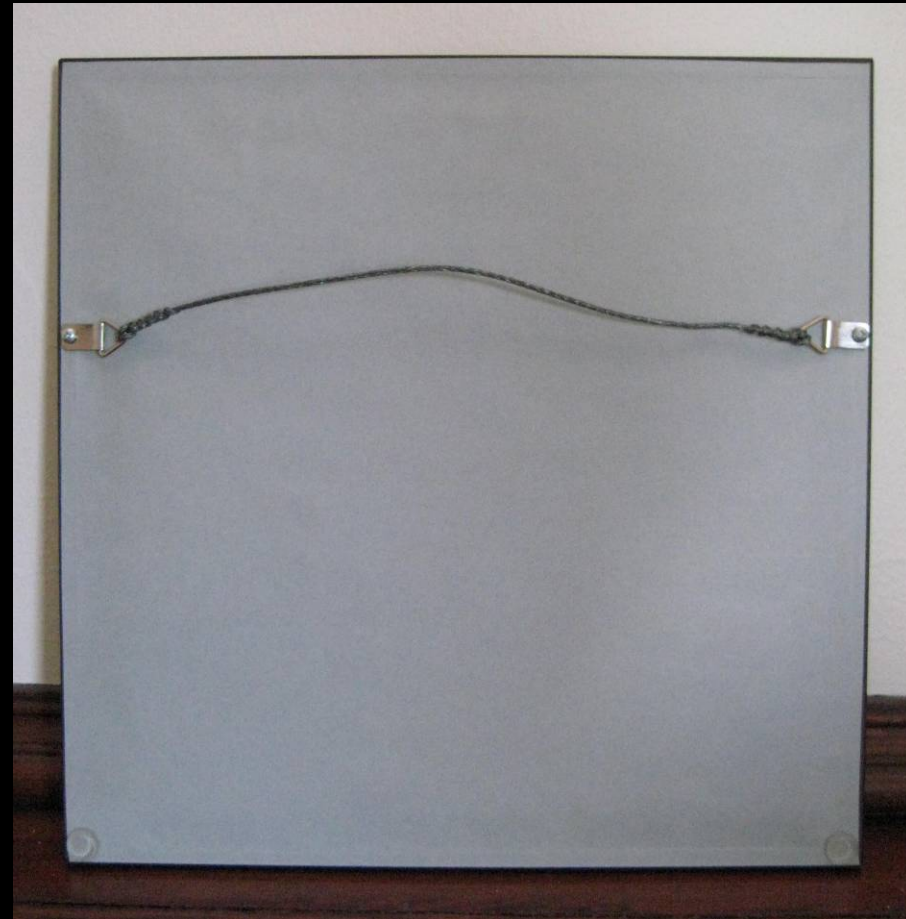
Use Caution:
Clean acrylic with
soft cloth and
non-ammonia based
cleaners only





Unsealed mat package
needs backing paper
to keep out dust

Sealed mat package with
Coroplast or polyester sheet
can be stored with or without
a frame - No backing paper needed

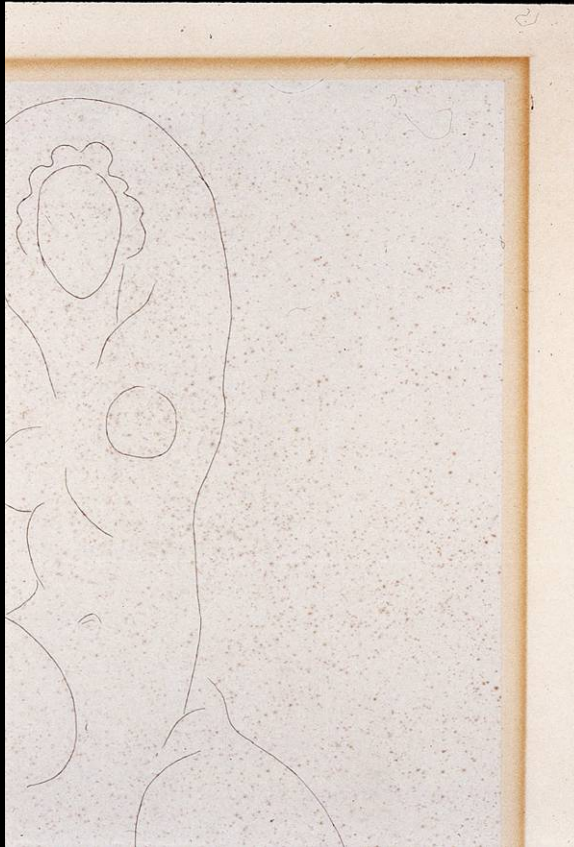


When to unframe a work on paper

Discolored mat

Darkening of paper

Foxing



Severe cockling

Broken glass

Mold

Slipped Hinge

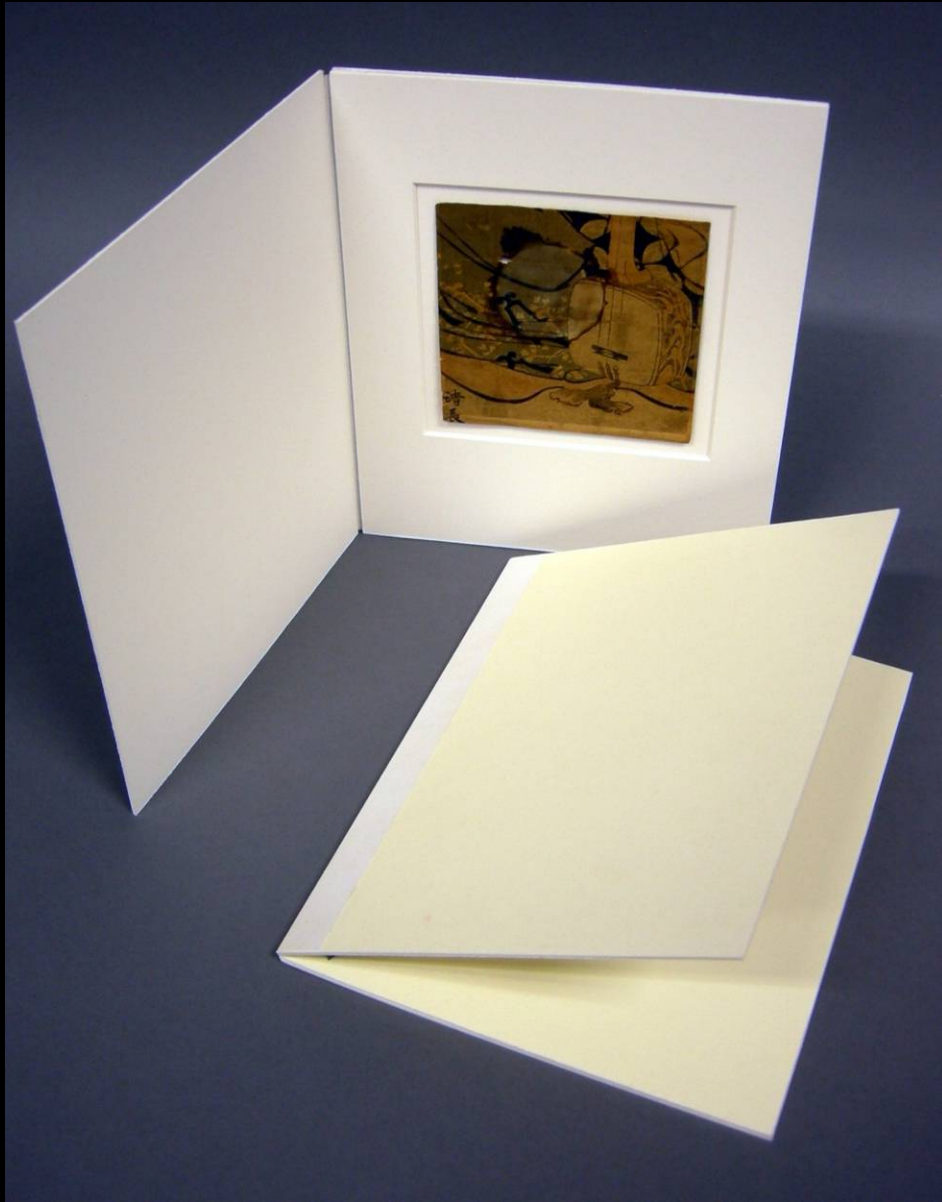
Torn paper

Any other time you
believe the piece
might be in danger



Just make sure you have somewhere to put the unframed
object BEFORE you take it out of the frame...

Presentation Mats/Unframed Storage



Standard sized mats can be rotated through the same set of frames for display



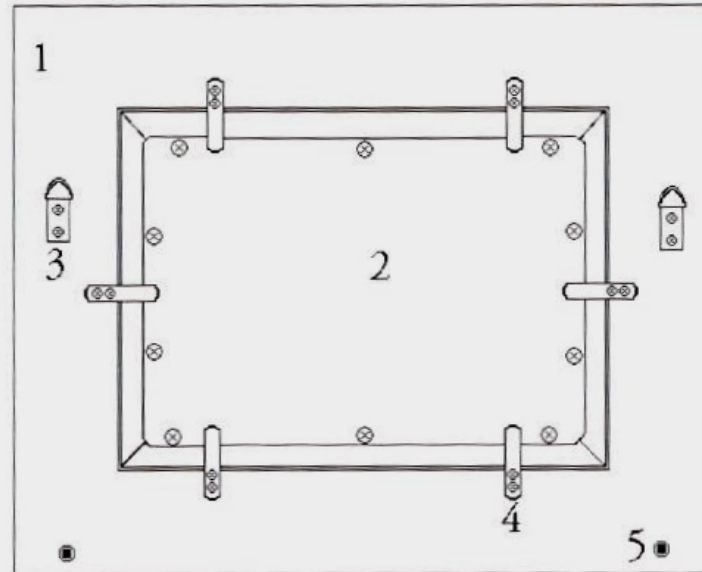
- Less space required to store objects
- Fewer frames to purchase
- Encourages giving your objects a well deserved rest

Poorly framed painting



Properly Framed Painting

Reverse of Properly Framed Painting, Backing Board, and Hanging Hardware



1. Back of a traditional picture frame
2. Backing board attached to stretcher with screws and washers
3. "D" rings to hang painting
4. Brass mending plates screwed into frame to secure the painting
5. Rubber spacers for air circulation

If you are framing a painting:
1) make sure the frame fits!



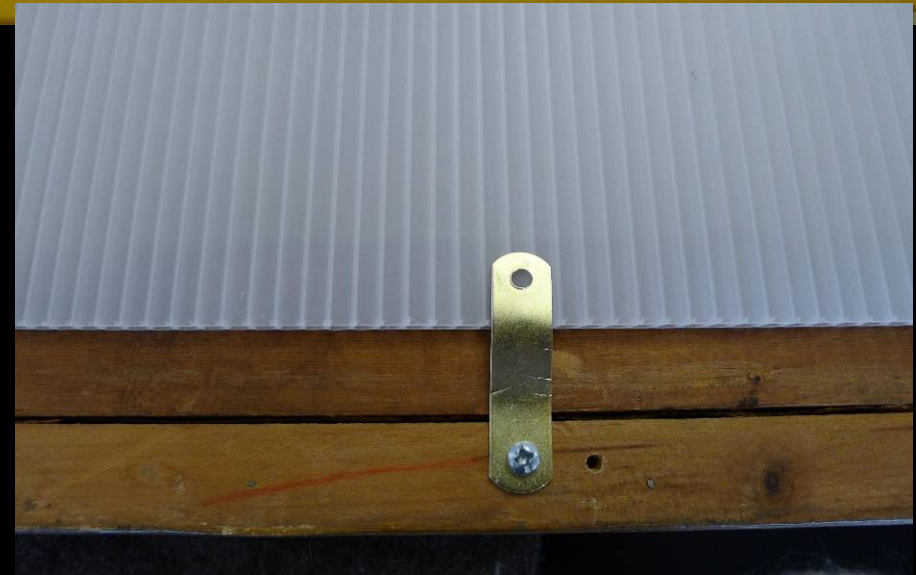
2) line the frame rabbet...



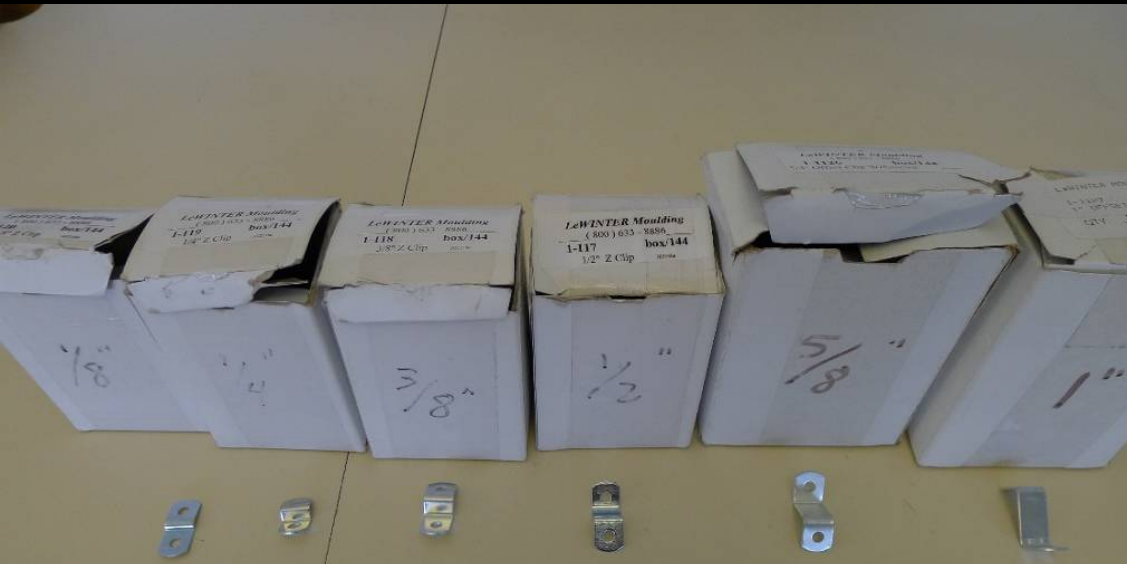
...to avoid rabbit abrasion



3) Secure painting in frame with offset-clips or mending plates, not nails



Offset-clips



Mending plates



4) Use d-rings and when possible,
hang from the d-rings not wire



5) Use wire with an appropriate weight rating



Avoid screw eyes



6) secure keys



7) put on a backing board (unless you are in an uncontrolled tropical climate)



Backing boards prevent damage from the verso
(and can even mitigate damage from the front)



Backing boards prevent accumulation of grime



Backing boards reduce vibration when the painting is moved and they provide an environmental buffer as climate conditions shift



When to glaze an oil painting?





If you could do just 1 or 2 things for your easel paintings:

- add a backing board (as long as you are in a temperate climate)
- if it is a heavy piece, add d-rings



Caring for frames



Painting in an original, possibly artist designed frame



Original Frame

Modern Frame



Before you do anything, check for insecurity



If you find detached pieces, save them – it is comparatively easy to reattach original



113 / 98FA



Having a conservator create molds and castes for replacement ornament is time consuming



Carved wood frames versus composition (compo) frames



18th-century French pastel in its original frame



19th-century American painting in its original frame

Example of how compo ornament was manufactured



Surface cleaning: dusting with a soft brush



Surface cleaning: dusting with a soft brush into a vacuum

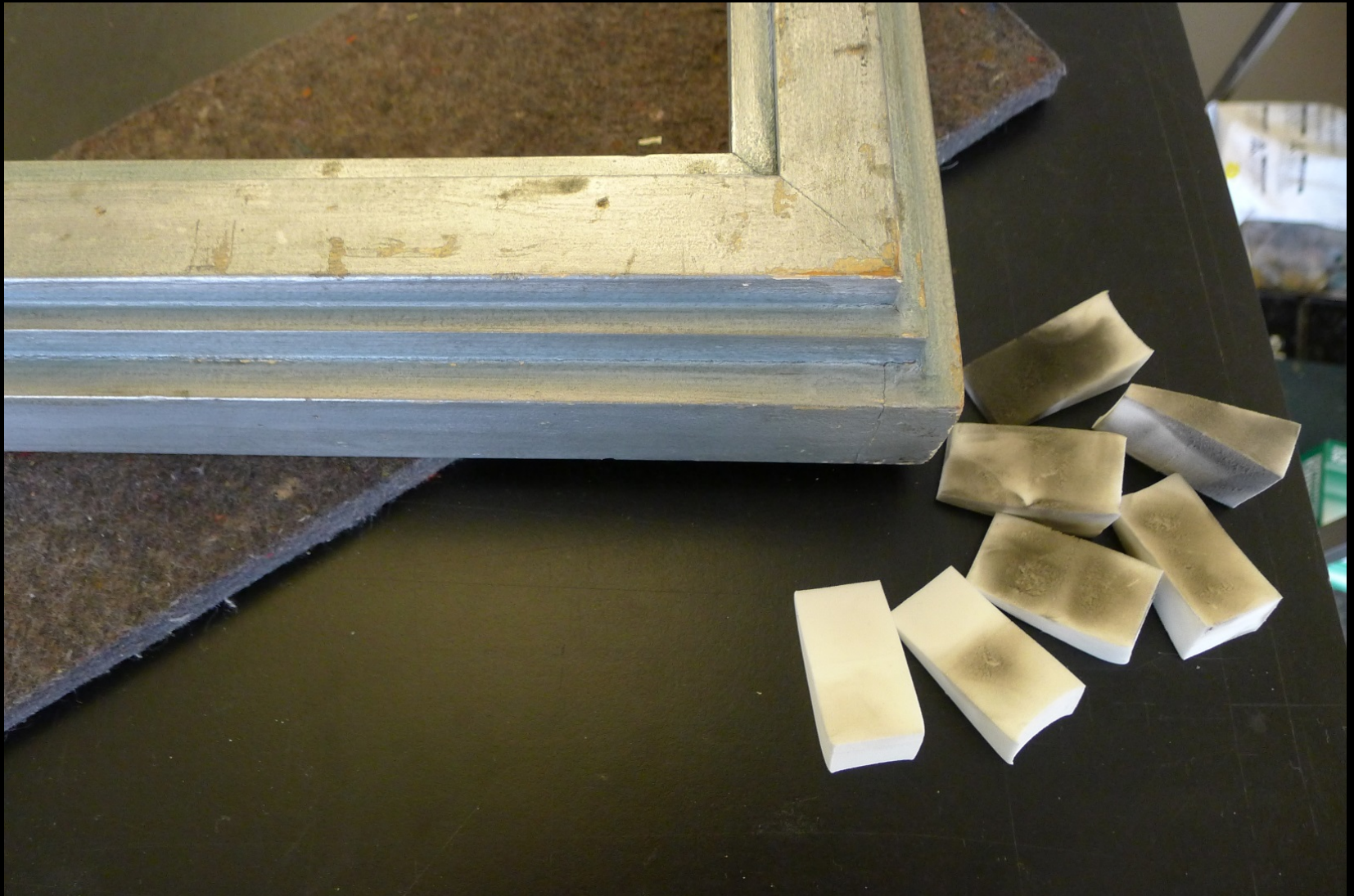


A gilt surface is delicate and can be fragile,
so watch out for:



Surface Abrasion

Surface cleaning: painted frames in good condition can often be surface cleaned with high density sponges (i.e. make-up sponges)

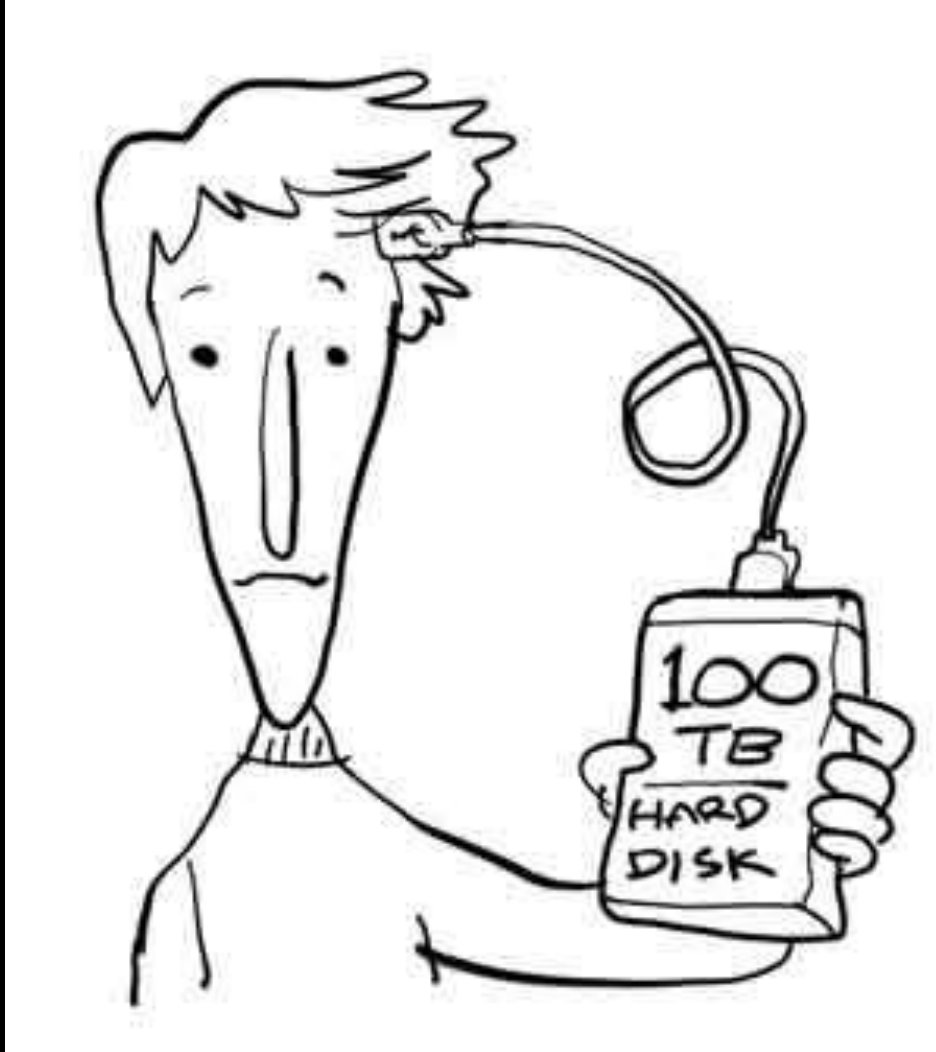


Toning back losses with watercolor





In Conclusion...



Whew! That was a lot of information... but hopefully you will be more comfortable coping with framed objects

Please refer to the handouts for even more information and additional resources

Lots of time for questions so please stay on and take advantage

If you need backup

The ICA:

www.ica-artconservation.org

ph: 216.658.8700

American Institute for Conservation:

www.conservation-us.org



america's oldest regional art conservation center