

TOTAL INSURANCE SOLUTIONS for the Art and Music Communities



APPRECIATING ART TRANSPORT AND WAREHOUSING RISKS

By Anne Rappa

When shipping your artwork either through long-haul transit to an international art exhibition or short-term warehousing, it is important to understand and review the safety and security of the shipping method as well as any temporary storage locations used along the way. Whether you are shipping an expensive Jackson Pollock painting or a lesser valued photograph, we recommend first identifying the potential risk exposure of the artwork during transit, due to size, weight, and shape characteristics.

For packing, shipping, and storage, your fine art should be protected properly by utilizing competent packers, to ensure that your artwork can withstand the normal hazards associated with transit or storage.

Although many believe the most common risk to artwork is theft, the occurrence is actually quite rare. The most common risk actually seen in fine art insurance is when artwork is being transported between locations. Because transporting of artwork is where damage most frequently occurs, Huntington T. Block recommends using quality, professional art handlers, shippers, and warehouses where possible.

SHIPPING CARRIERS:

Huntington T. Block understands that private collectors, museums, and dealers look at many variables when shipping their artwork; seeking the safest conditions at a reasonable price.

- When my clients ask me about using regular carriers (United Parcel Services (UPS), or Federal Express (FedEx)), I advise them to expect that their packages will be treated in a more cavalier manner than with professional art handling.
- When in doubt about service, find a professional fine art handler. Art handlers specialize in fine art shipping, are often artists themselves, and are interested in protecting the artwork under their care.

ART STORAGE:

- The best warehouses hire and train art handlers who have an arts background. Human error accounts for a great deal of the damage to art property and interested employees greatly reduce such errors – something not widely known but made clear to me after many years of working with art handlers.
- Despite the attractive prices of self-storage facilities, they don't always include essential services to protect artwork, they should thus be avoided whenever possible.

FINE ART INSURANCE FOR PACKING, SHIPPING, AND STORAGE:

- Your fine art insurance policy placed with Huntington T. Block is insured 'wall to wall': your artwork is covered worldwide, from the time it is taken off the wall, during transit, and at its new location.
- With the above in mind, anyone who deals with the shipping and storage of artwork, should also:
 1. Be clear on who is responsible for the shipment/transit/storage of the artwork.
 2. Have a condition report conducted of the art both prior to any packing and shipping and upon delivery. A condition report, is best done by a professional third party, and is sent along to the new owner/lending party with the shipment.

Over, please.

CLAIMS SCENARIO AND LESSONS LEARNED

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Accidental damage to fine art represents a large percentage of all fine art claims. The packing, art handling, shipping and warehousing of artwork is very important to the safety of fine art pieces.

Loss or damage can occur at any stage of the movement of the artwork, whether it be due to insufficient packing prior to shipping, poor handling of the item during shipping, or while in storage.

I will never forget one pair of artworks featuring separate images of a man and a woman who survived together on wood panels for hundreds of years until a forklift ran through one of the crates. The male image (he was not very attractive) remained pristine and the female (absolutely beautiful) was hit right in the center of the face. Heartbreaking!

LESSONS LEARNED: When possible ensure a supervisor or individual responsible is present at key locations where objects are being loaded and off loaded.

THE VALUE OF HUNTINGTON T. BLOCK:

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Huntington T. Block helps our clients reduce risk exposure through our consultative approach and experience. As an example, one client wanted to transport a \$3,000,000 artwork outside of the United States, holding it at a location before it shipped. I asked them if that location had a fire alarm or fire mitigation system. They discovered that it didn't. As we continued to discuss the matter, my client opted to rearrange the transport, so the artwork would go directly from their protected location directly to the airport, thus avoiding the trans-shipment location altogether - a simple solution to the risk we discovered together.

Another client wanted to send out many artworks for conservation with a total cumulative value of \$10,000,000. We had the same fire safety discussion about the location of the conservator, resulting in the same response. In that case the individual works were lower in value, so the client decided to send the works to the conservator in smaller increments, moving one set in and another out to reduce the total value at risk at any given time.

Experienced based advice and guidance on best practices helps our clients protect their artwork and avoid a loss.



For more information related to fine art insurance, please contact Huntington T. Block at HTBinfo@huntingtontblock.com

