



DHPS|NY

DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE
& PRESERVATION SERVICES
FOR NEW YORK

Thanks for joining us! Today's presentation will begin shortly.

Please check your audio and video settings.
You should currently hear music in the background.

If you have questions or want to report any technical issues,
contact us at info@dhpsny.org or (215) 545-0613.



DHPS | NY

DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE
& PRESERVATION SERVICES
FOR NEW YORK

Preservation in Exhibits

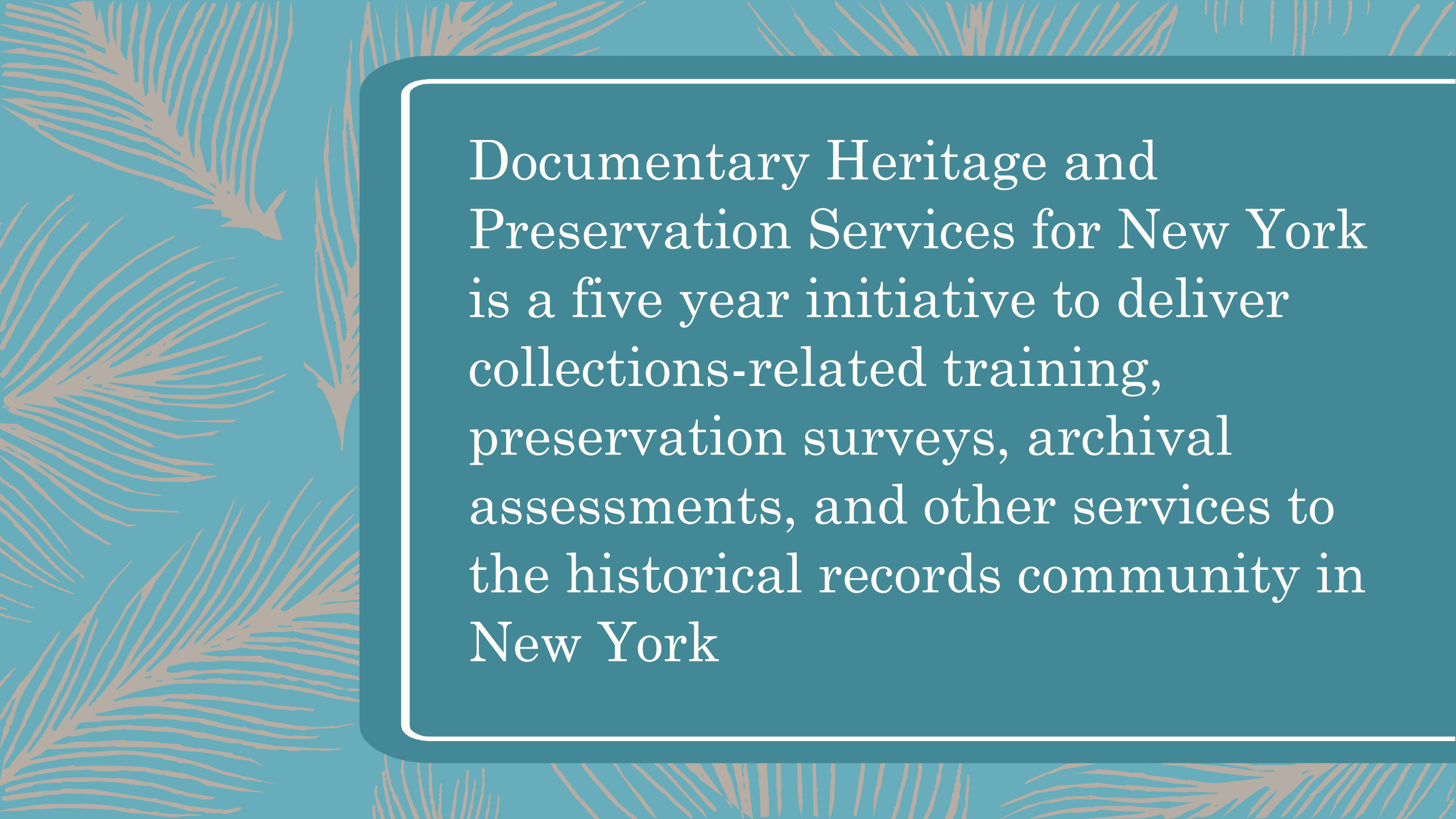
Amelia Parks, DHPSNY Archives Specialist

2018



New
York State
Library



The background of the slide is a solid teal color. Overlaid on this background are several stylized, light brown palm fronds. These fronds are scattered across the slide, with some appearing on the left side and others on the right. The fronds have a feathery, segmented appearance.

Documentary Heritage and
Preservation Services for New York
is a five year initiative to deliver
collections-related training,
preservation surveys, archival
assessments, and other services to
the historical records community in
New York

Planning



Why Create Exhibits



The World Bewitch'd , exhibit at Cornell University

- Introduce audience to your archives and holdings
- Connect the topic with community events and history
- Makeovers can be creative dynamic and fun, revitalize your museum and bring in new visitors.

Exhibition Topics

- Mission Statement
- Current events & pop culture
- Serendipitous finds or new donations
- Underused collections
- Historic anniversaries
- Local interest
- Complementary programming to other local institutions

Norwich Pharmacal display,
Chenango County Historical Society



A large, stylized teal feather graphic is positioned on the left side of the slide, extending from the bottom towards the top. It has a central rachis with many fine, radiating barbs, giving it a delicate, fan-like appearance.

Budget

- Facsimiles
- Background graphics
- Printing for brochures or other items
- Advertising
- Additional staffing
- Supplies
- Specialists for mounting or designing

Getting Started & Object Selection





First Steps

Exhibition Policy

- Function of exhibits
- Committees
- Preservation
- Timeframes
- Responsibilities
- Security
- Access
- Documentation

Documentation

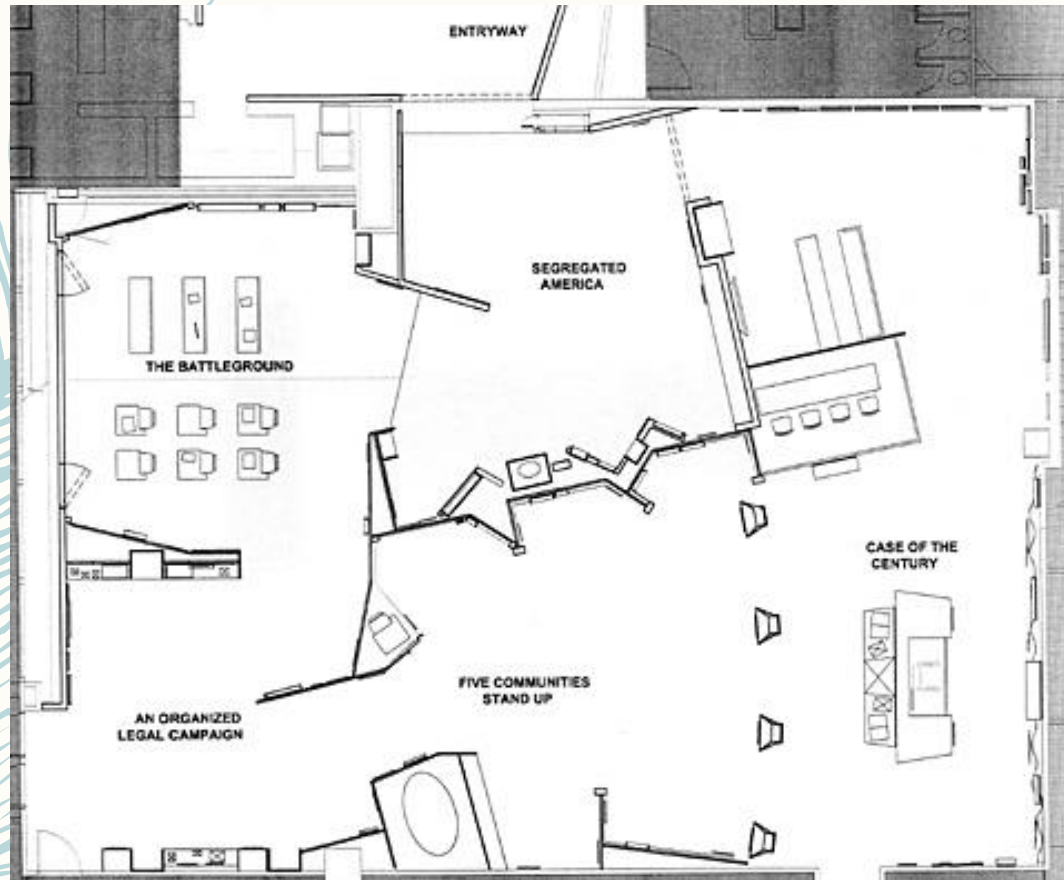
- Object Documentation
 - Provenance
 - Accession records
- Research Documentation
 - Authenticity
 - Connection to exhibit theme
 - Context of the object
- Exhibit Documentation
 - Inventories
 - Condition reports

Plan Ahead

- 6 months - 1 year in advance
- Assemble a team
- Research
- Choose items
- Gather documentation
- Exhibit mock-up
- Construction and installation



The Space



- Use floor plans
- Know what cases and frames are available
- How much light is in the space
- Monitor climate

Selecting Objects

- Facsimiles! Facsimiles! Facsimiles!
- Physically stable
- Avoid light sensitive objects (inks, photos, textiles)
- Relevant
- Supported by research
- Aesthetic considerations
- Plan object rotation



Design



- Does the display convey what you intend
- Dynamic groupings or single items
- **Less is More!!!**
- Are objects clearly labeled
- Are items secure
- Ask for input

Handling & Preservation





Light

Class of Objects	Examples	Max Light Levels	Max UV Levels
Extremely Sensitive	Textiles, photos, inks, dyes	50 lux	20 $\mu\text{W}/\text{lm}$
Sensitive	Oil paintings, organic materials	200 lux	20 $\mu\text{W}/\text{lm}$
Relatively Insensitive	Most stone, glass, ceramic, and metal	300 lux	75 $\mu\text{W}/\text{lm}$

Adapted from *the Manual of Museum Exhibitions*

Lighting Solutions

- UV filters
- LED lights
- Tungsten lights
- Motion detectors
- Timed shut-off



Climate Control

Exhibition Type	Relative Humidity Set Point	Temperature
Loans and permanent collection displays	50% \pm 5%, or as specified in loan	70° F \pm 4° F
Permanent collection displays with seasonal changes	50% \pm with an annual average \pm 10%	Set point between 59 and 77° F \pm 4° F

Adapted from *the Manual of Museum Exhibitions*

Air Movement and Outdoor Air

- Block incoming air
- Combat thermal stratification
- Visitors change the heat and humidity!
- Avoid air leakage
- The volume of air in the space should pass through your air handling unit 6-8 times/hour or more

One Artifact at a Time

- Use common sense
- Handle artifacts as infrequently as possible.
- Use carts, folders, and boxes to carry objects.
- Avoid stairs and take elevators!
- Use two hands and/or two people.
- Use facsimiles when designing your exhibit.



"A crew installing Helen Frankenthaler's painting Guiding Red, 1977... in the mezzanine of World Trade Center II." (aaa.si.edu)

Handling paper



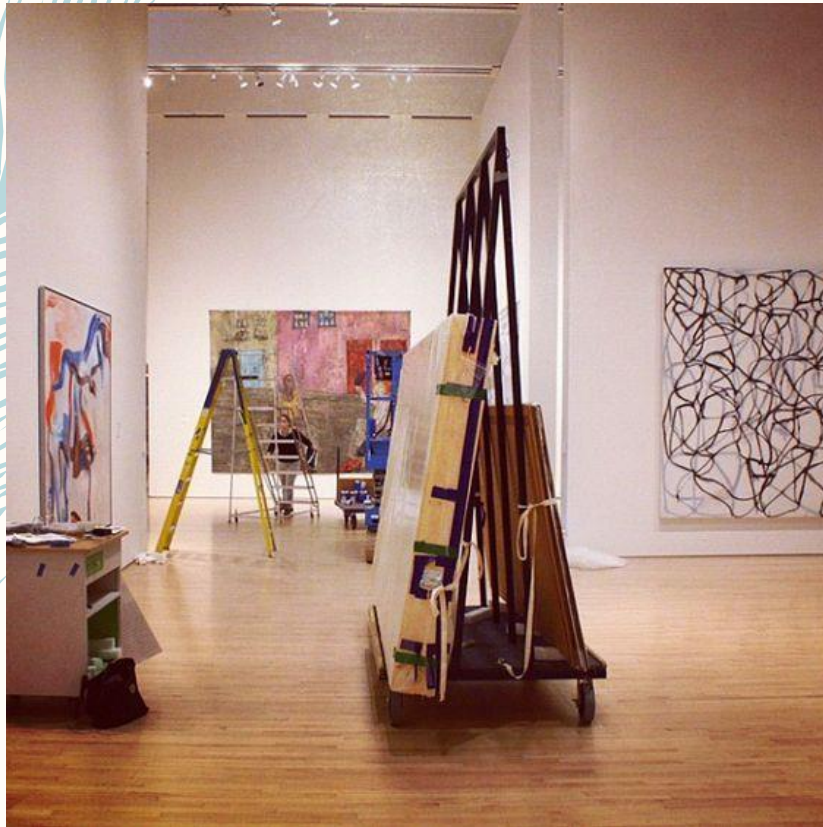
Handling Paper

Rigid Supports



Flexible Supports

Paintings and frames



- *Always* lift with two hands from the bottom or both sides.
- Never stack frames. Never lean against each other.
- Protect from light when possible.
- Always use carpet feet, foam, or cardboard barriers.
- Keep object flat or upright in the direction it hangs.
- Use carts, dollies, and A-frames when possible.



Gloves or No Gloves?

Gloves (Nitrile gloves)

- Photographs
- Gilded Frames
- Textiles (can be cotton gloves)

No Gloves (Clean Hands)

- Paper

Nitrile gloves are preferable to cotton gloves. Cotton gloves absorb oils from hands, decrease dexterity and can snag or tear paper.

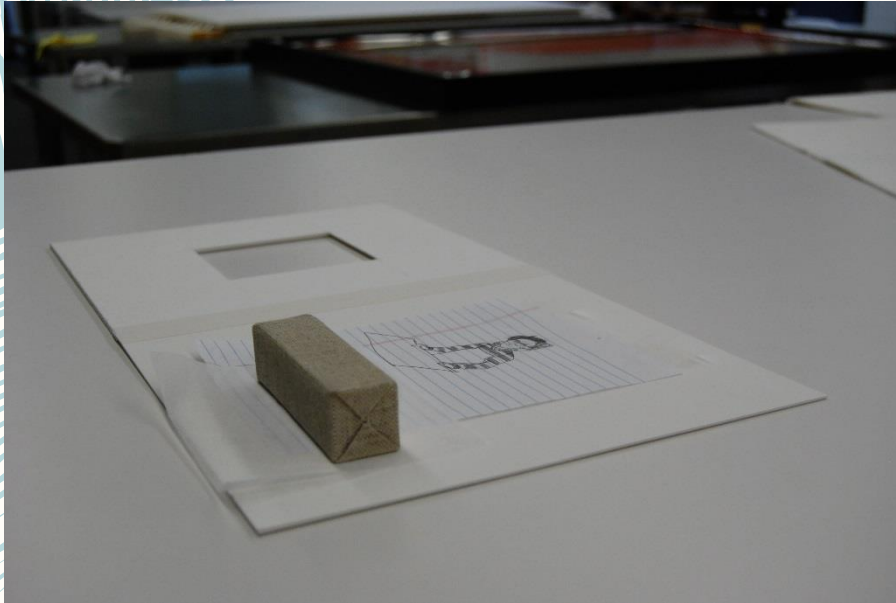
Handling Objects



Image from: Shelley, Marjorie, and Helmut Nickel. *The Care and Handling of Art Objects: Practices in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale U, 2000.

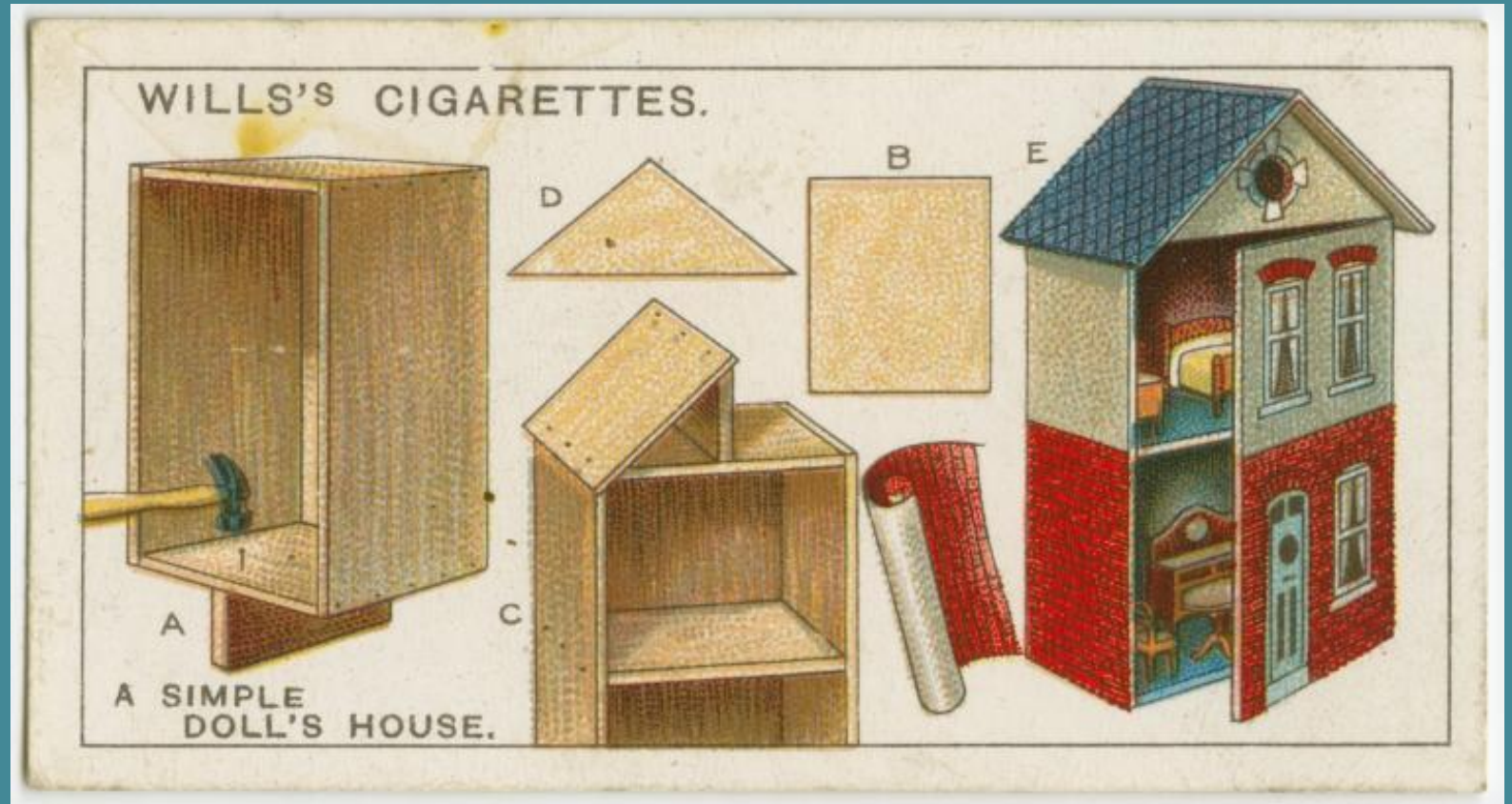
- Remove mounts
- Use two hands at all times
- Do not lift or carry by protruding parts
- Be careful of hand placement and fragile elements

Workspace



- Be aware of airflow, vents, fans, etc.
- Use smooth weights
- Landing space for objects
- Secure
- Clean and organized
- Padding/containers for objects
- Spacious
- Object snakes/weights

Materials





You need...

- acid-free matt board
- acid-free foam core
- Corrugated blue board
- Bone/Teflon folder
- PVA, double stick tape, or other archival adhesive. **This is for mounts not objects!**
- Soft brushes for cleaning
- Corner supports
- Museum wax
- Support mounts (purchased or made)
- Ethafoam planks & wedges
- Wire of various weights
- Pins and tacks
- Cutting tools
- Screws and nails
- Tool box basics – hammer, screws, drill, tape measure, wire cutter, pliers
- Microspattula



Types of Materials to Use

- **Paints** – acrylic latex, shellac, let case or wall aerate for at least 3 weeks
- **Plastics** – Polyacrylonites (Plexi, Lucite), Polyethylene (foam, Mylar, etc.), Polycarbonates, Polyester, Mylar, acrylics
- **Adhesives** – acrylic polymer solutions wheat starch, methylcellulose, Polyvinyl acetate (PVA), double sided archival tape, hot melt adhesives. Always aerate!
- **Mechanical fasteners** – stainless steel or monel alloy
- **Fabrics** – vegetable fiber (cotton , linen), wash first, polyester, acrylics
- **Paper** – acid-free and unbuffered (for photos, and protein based materials), acid free and buffered for other materials



Materials to Avoid

VOCs - Volatile Organic Compounds are emitted as gases from certain solids or liquids, they may have short-term and long-term adverse health effects. (EPA)

- **Woods** – *Oak, chestnut, Douglas fir, yellow pine, red mahogany, teak, western red cedar, cork*
- **Laminate wood** - *Masonite, chip board, particle board, interior plywood, C-grade plywood*
- **Plastics** – *Polyvinyl chloride, bubble wrap, vinyl (lettering, pockets, sheeting, etc.) and more*
- **Paints & Varnishes**– *oil, latex, polyurethanes*
- **Glues**
- **Gaseous Compounds** brought in from outside air and human traffic

Related Issues

- Microclimates
- Buffering materials



Oddy Test

The Oddy test is an accelerated corrosion test employed by museums to evaluate the suitability of materials for use in display and storage cases. The standard Oddy test requires a separate test set-up and control run for each of the three metals commonly involved: silver, copper and lead.

AIC's Oddy Testing:

[http://www.conservation-wiki.com/wiki/Oddy Tests: Materials Databases](http://www.conservation-wiki.com/wiki/Oddy_Tests:_Materials_Databases)



Vendors

University Products

www.universityproducts.com

Nielsen & Bainbridge

www.nielsen-bainbridge.com

Benchmark

www.benchmarkcatalog.com

Gaylord

www.gaylord.com

Tap Plastics

www.tapplastics.com

Talas

www.talasonline.com

Fine Art Service, LLC

www.fineartservice.net

Test Fabrics

www.testfabrics.com

SmallCorp

www.smallcorp.com

BookMakers

www.bookmakerscatalog.com



Cases and frames

Hood & Tabletop Cases



Freestanding Cases



Wall Cases





Glazing

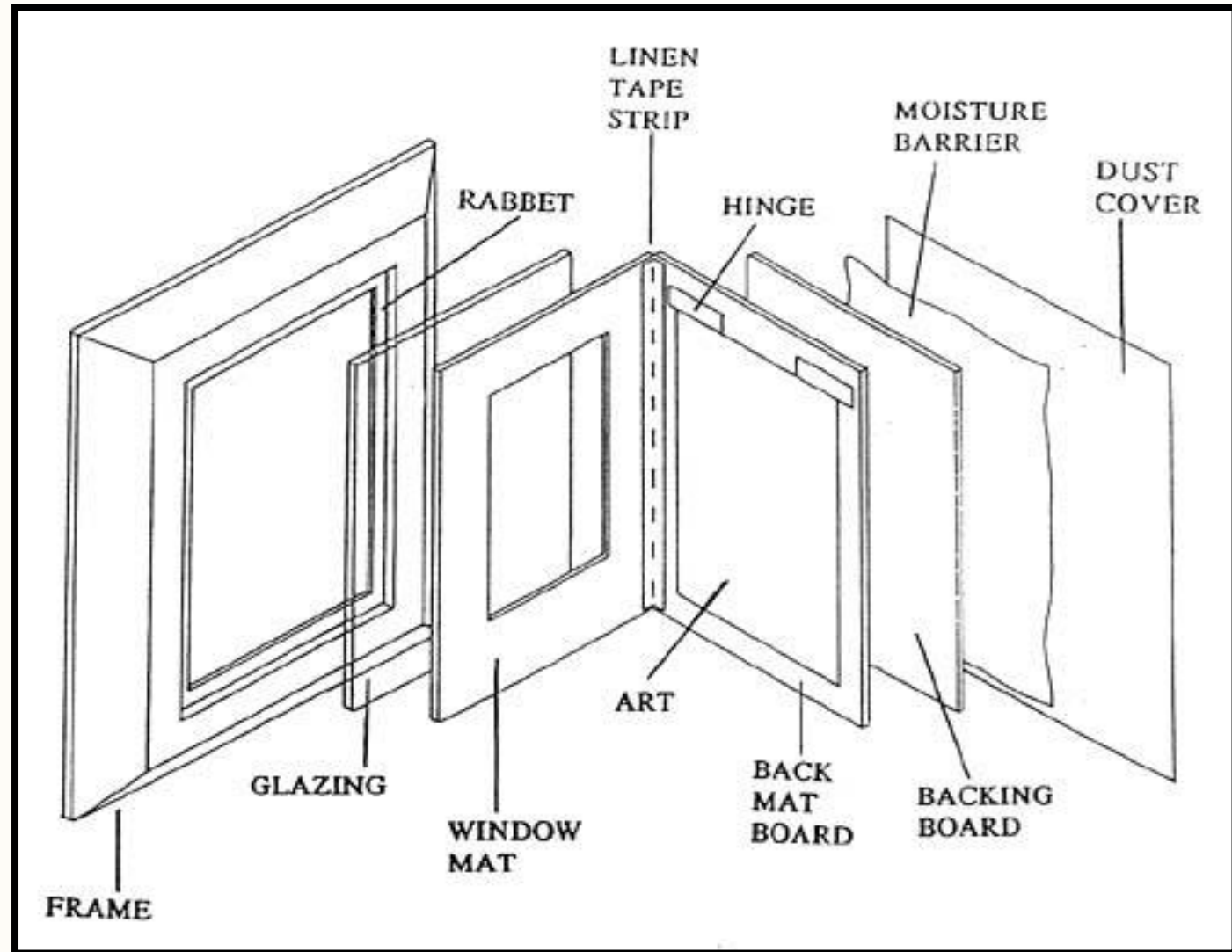
GLASS

- Heavy
- 6 – 10mm safety glass or low-iron float glass
- Ages better
- Most secure

ACRYLIC

- Lighter
- Large cases may be unwieldy
- Tends to scratch and crack
- Attracts dust
- Can melt in a fire

Contents of a Picture Frame



Reusing an Original Frame

- The frame must be sturdy and stable, large enough, and deep enough.
- Update the hanging hardware as necessary. Don't reuse old holes.

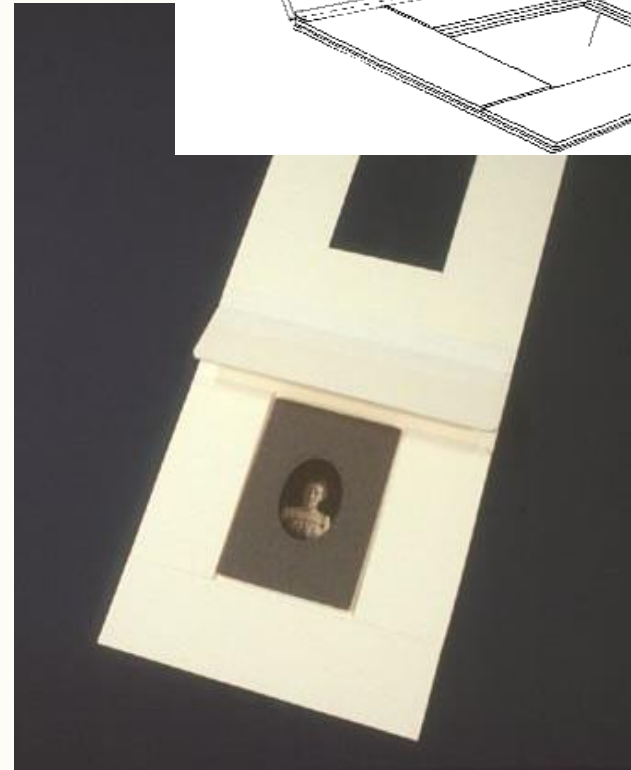
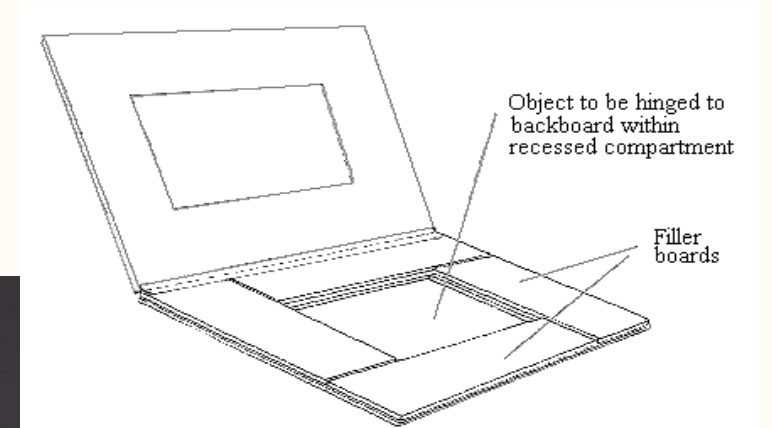
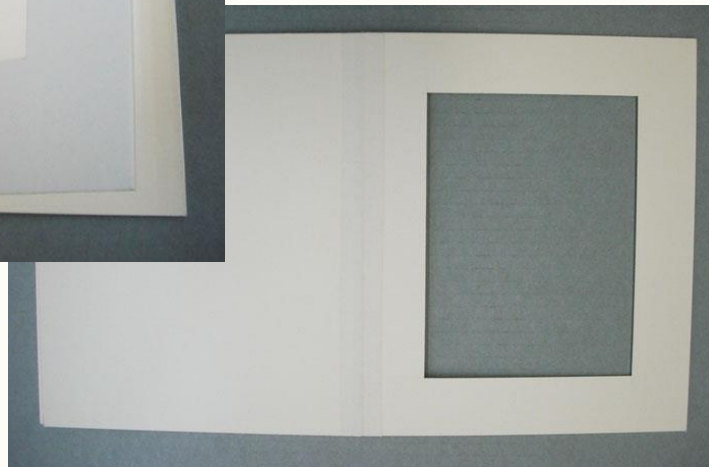
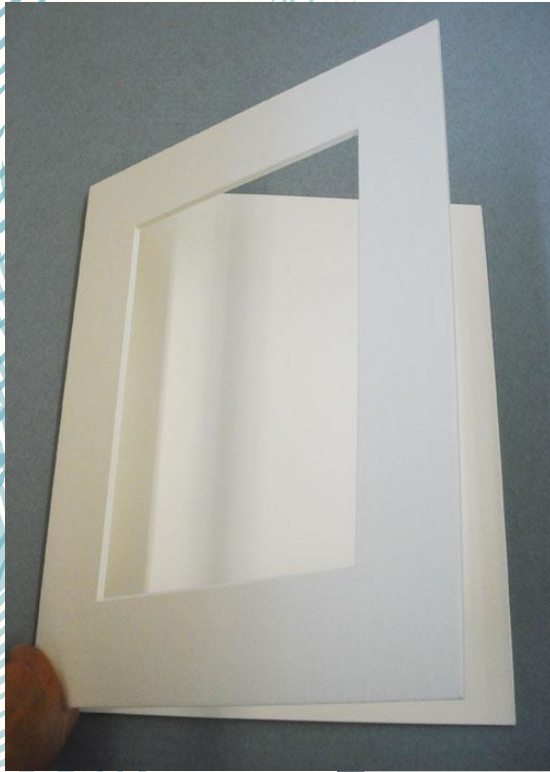


Mats



- 100 % cotton rag or alpha cellulose
- Lignin free and acid free
- Alkaline reserve (3% calcium carbonate as a buffer)
- For photographs mats **must** pass the PAT and meet ISO standard 18902:2007.

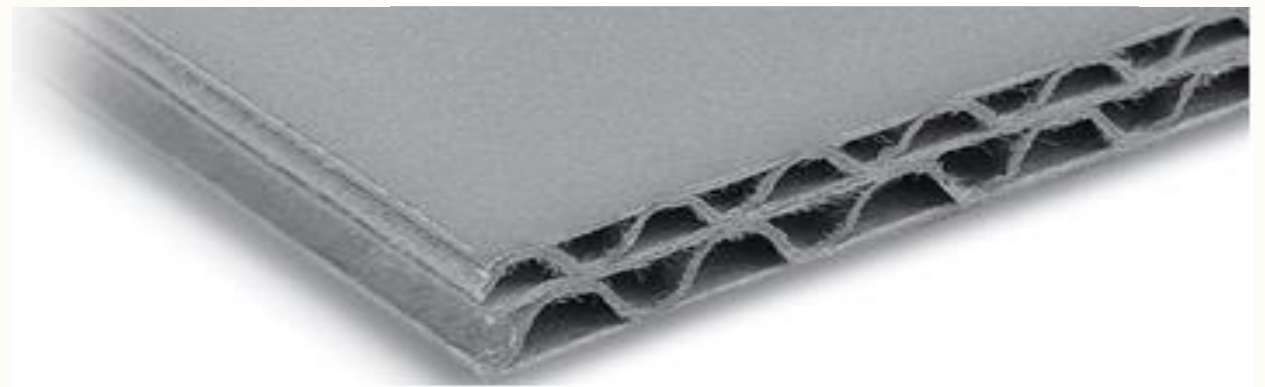
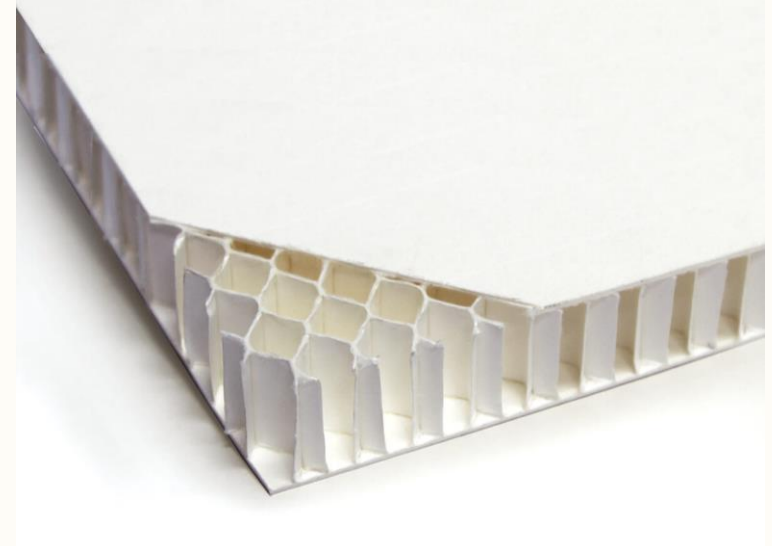
Mats





Rigid Backing Board

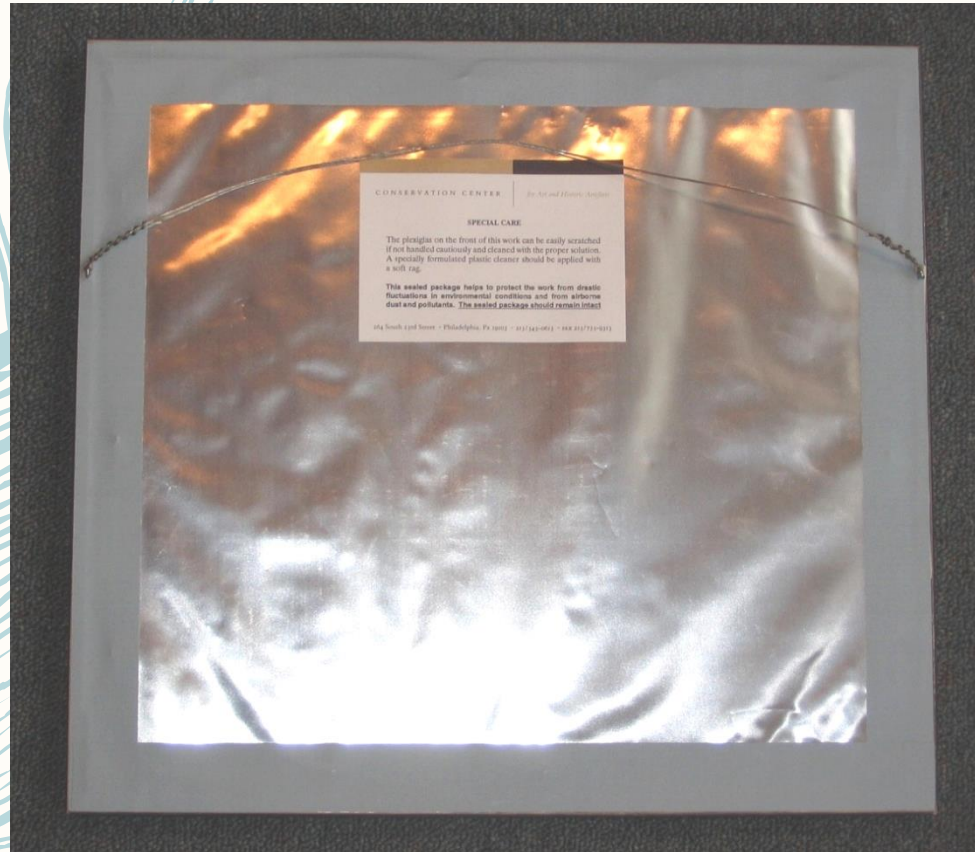
- 100% alkaline corrugated board (blue board)
- Coroplast-fluted corrugated board
- Tycore





- Glazier's points
- Offset clips and screws
- Brads with gun
- Brads with pusher

Dust Cover and Seal



- **Basic** - brown paper adhered with double-sided tape
- **Moisture barrier** - Marvelseal adhered with frame sealing tape or a sealed package with frame sealing tape

Examples of Good Hardware



D-ring and plastic-coated
galvanized picture wire



Screw eye and plastic-coated
galvanized picture wire

Mount Fabrication





Mounting Basics

- Do NOT alter the object to fit the mount
- Support objects completely
- Place the object at its center of gravity
- Use place holders/facsimiles. Do not try an unfinished mount on the object
- All mounts should be cleaned and padded when appropriate
- Mounts need to protect the object
- Mounts should never be permanently attached to the artifact
- If the object shape fluctuates the mount must accommodate for that
- Objects must be secure
- Mounts and exhibits must utilize inert materials
- Sharp edges should be removed or padded



...che il p
...non s'aveva dal d
...e l'esse di Asgore e detto.
...dalla compagna Aleno.



Museum of American History



Mary & Leigh Block Museum of Art





Book Cradles

MAT BOARD BOOK CRADLE

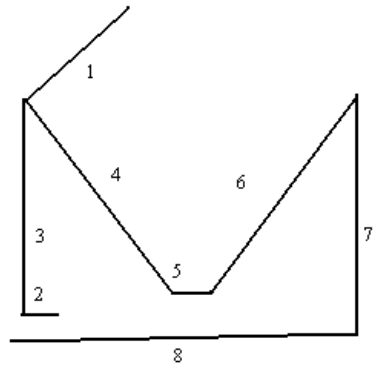
Following are simple instructions for constructing a mat board book cradle. These instructions are intended to give you the basics in materials and structure, and the principles may be applied to mounts for other artifacts.

MATERIALS

- Board – 4-ply mat board (museum quality, rag)
- Ruler
- Scalpel or utility knife
- Pencil
- Triangle
- T-square
- Bone or Teflon folder
- Double-stick tape (3M 415)

Step 1: MEASURE THE BOOK

First, cover your work surface with a large piece of paper. Using your ruler, measure the height of the book. Then, using bricks or weights or other supports, open the book to a comfortable opening with the spine flat on your paper-covered work surface. For recording your measurements, it helps to draw a simple diagram, like this –

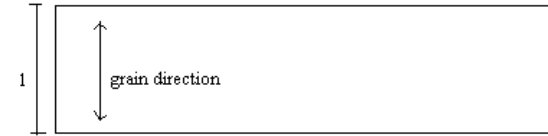


Record the following measurements:

- 1 = the height of the book
- 2 = 1 inch
- 3 = the height from the work surface to the edge of the front board (make a mark)
- 4 = the width of the front board from the work surface to the outer edge (make a mark)
- 5 = the width between the marks made by measurement #4 and #6
- 6 = the width of the back board from the work surface to the outer edge (make a mark)
- 7 = the height from the work surface to the edge of the back board (make a mark)
- 8 = the width between the marks made by measurements #3 and #7

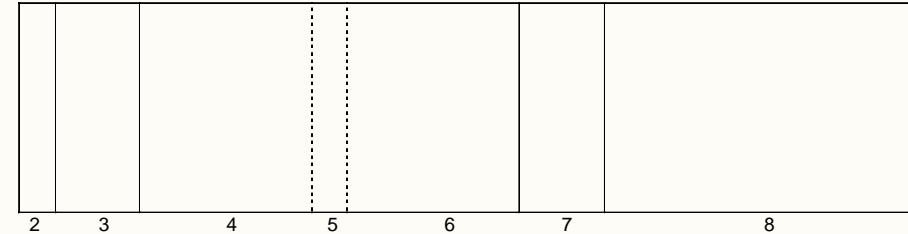
Step 2: CUT THE MAT BOARD

Determine the grain direction on your piece of mat board. Using a board shear or a utility knife, cut a long strip of mat board to the height of the book, making sure that the grain direction runs parallel to the height of the book.



Step 3: MARK AND SCORE THE MAT BOARD

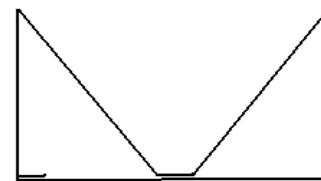
Starting at one edge of your cut piece of mat board, mark the measurements #2 through #8 in order. Using a T-square against the straight edge of your work surface, score lines with a scalpel or utility knife at each mark EXCEPT the two center marks (after #4 and #5, represented as dotted lines below) that correspond to the spine of the book. For those cuts, transfer the marks to the other side of the board and score the lines on the reverse side. Cut off the excess board at the last mark (after #8). Erase any visible pencil marks.



When scoring, cut approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way through the board for a clean bend.

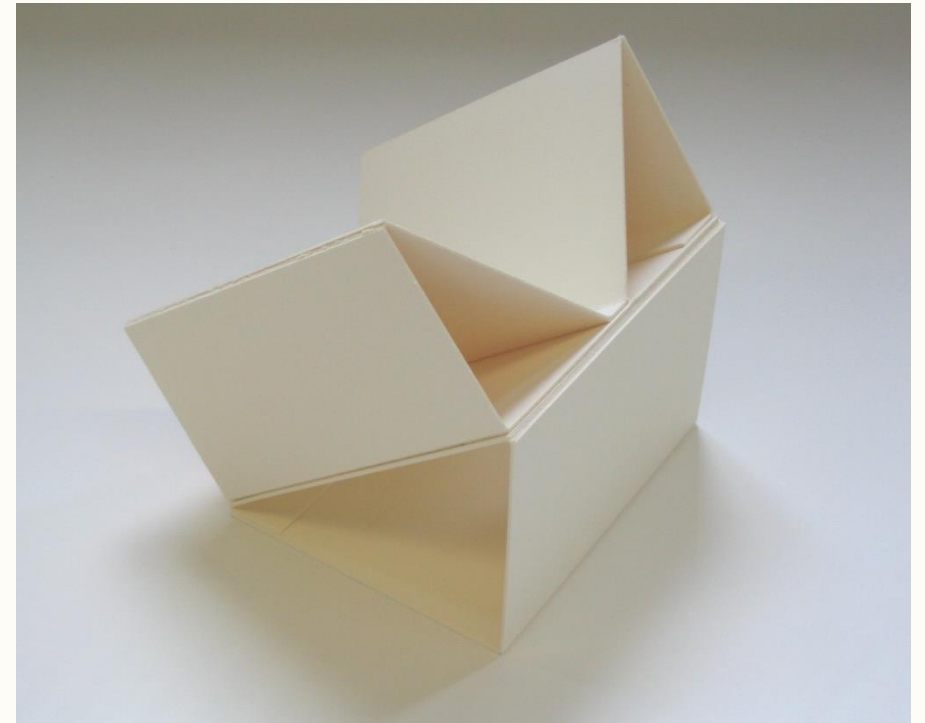
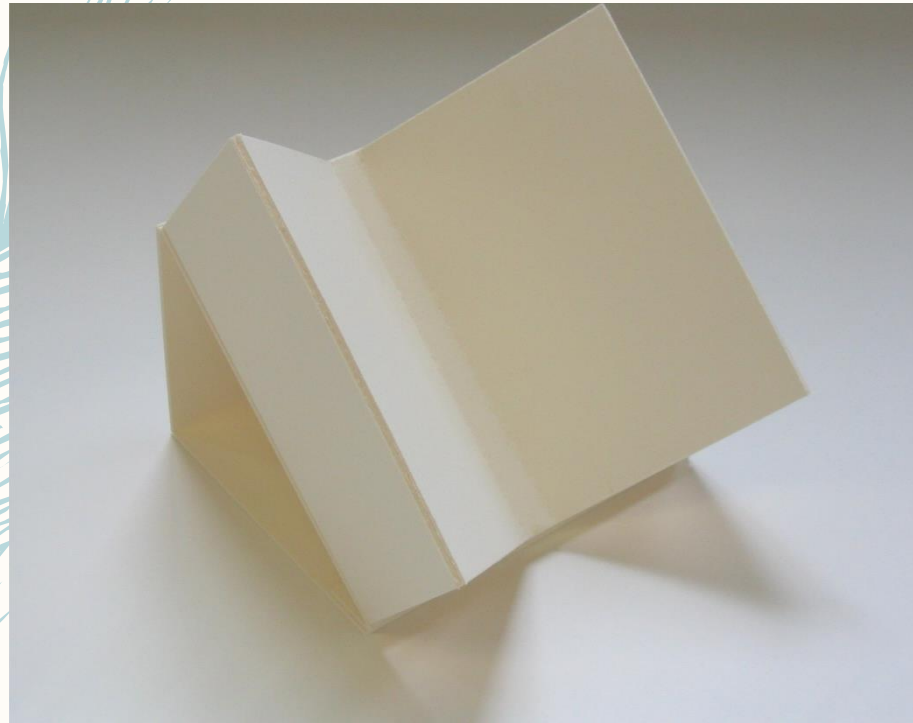
Step 4: FOLD AND FASTEN THE CRADLE

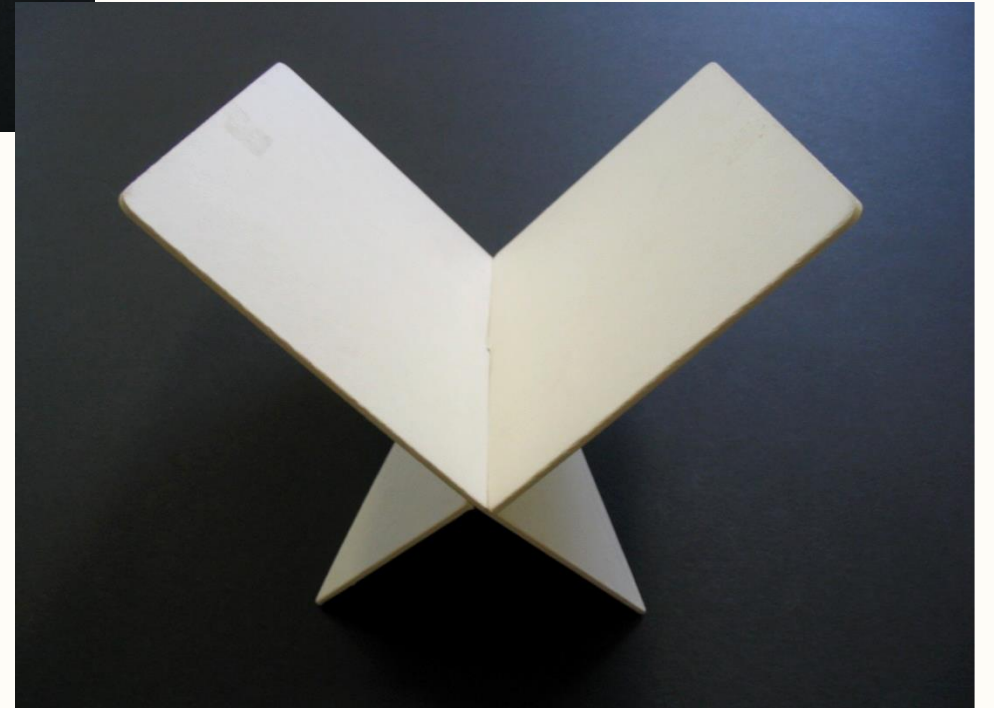
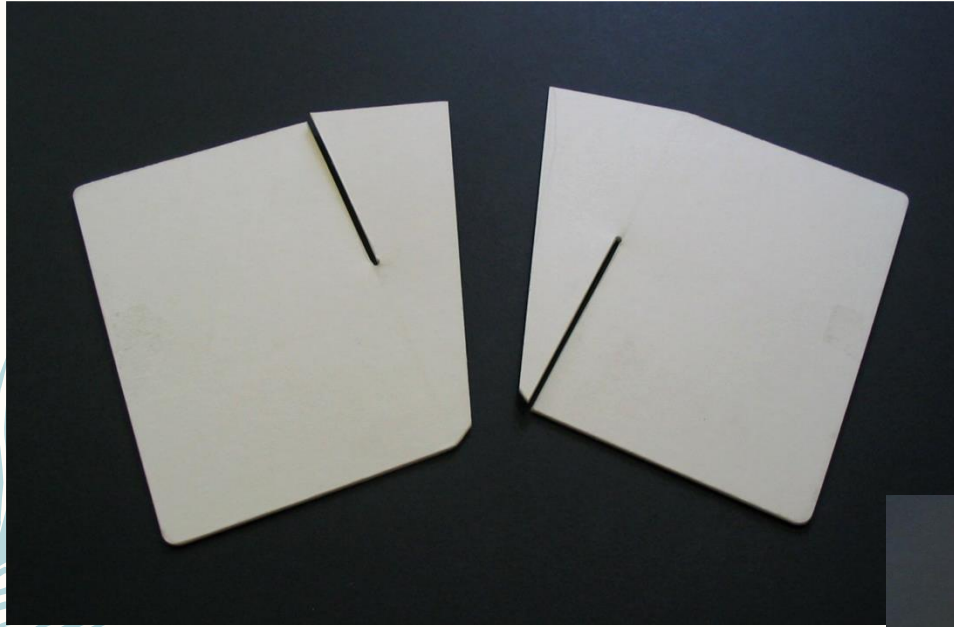
Attach lengths of double-stick tape to the front of the 1-inch stub (#2) and to the back of the spine (#5). Peel and stick the folded edge of #2 to the cut edge of #8. Using a triangle to make sure the sides of the cradle are perpendicular, peel and stick the bottom of the spine (#5) to the bottom of the cradle (#8). Your finished cradle should something like this:

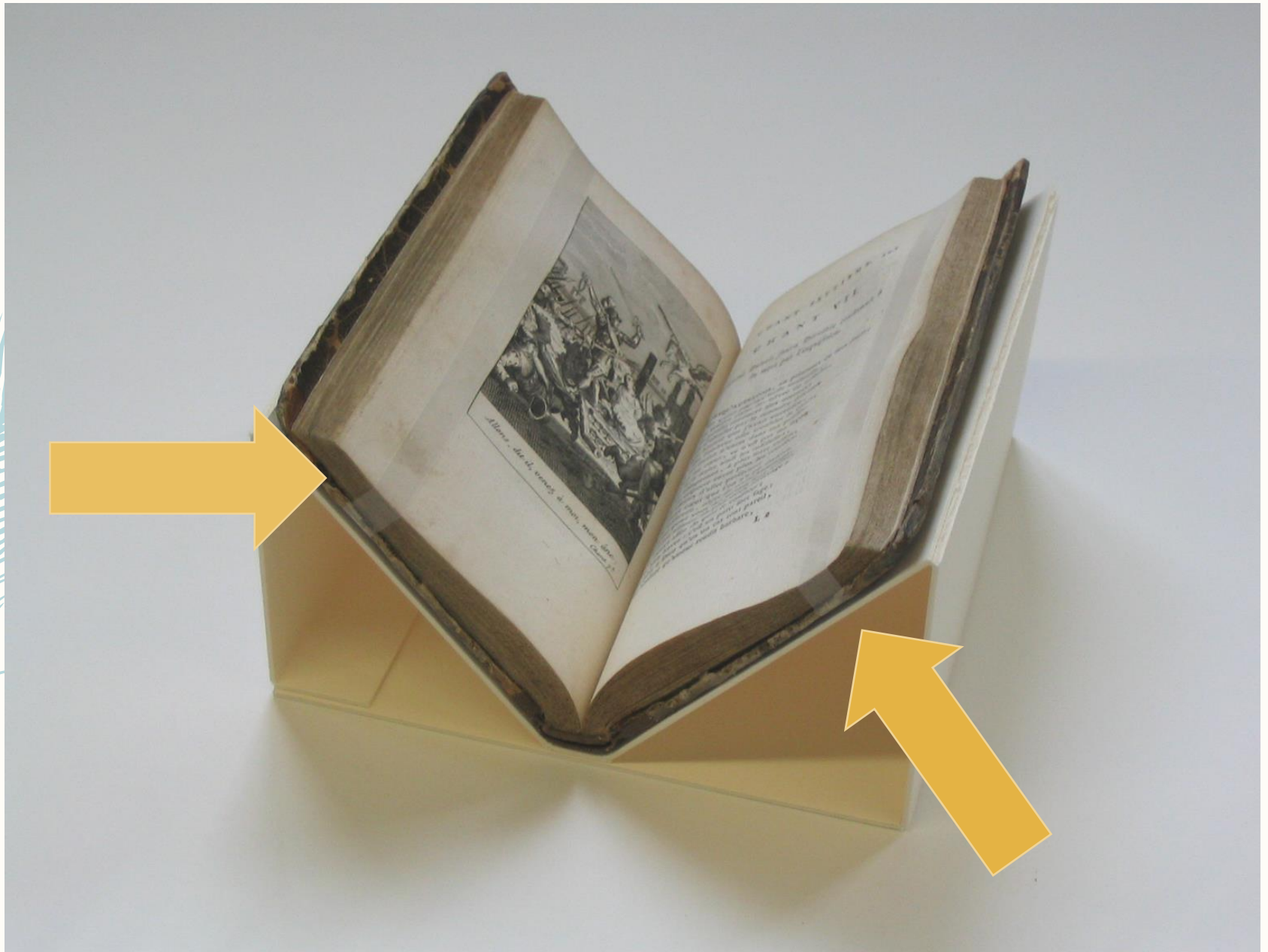


Shelly Smith, NYPL
Jim Hinz, Book Conservator
Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts

Finished Product





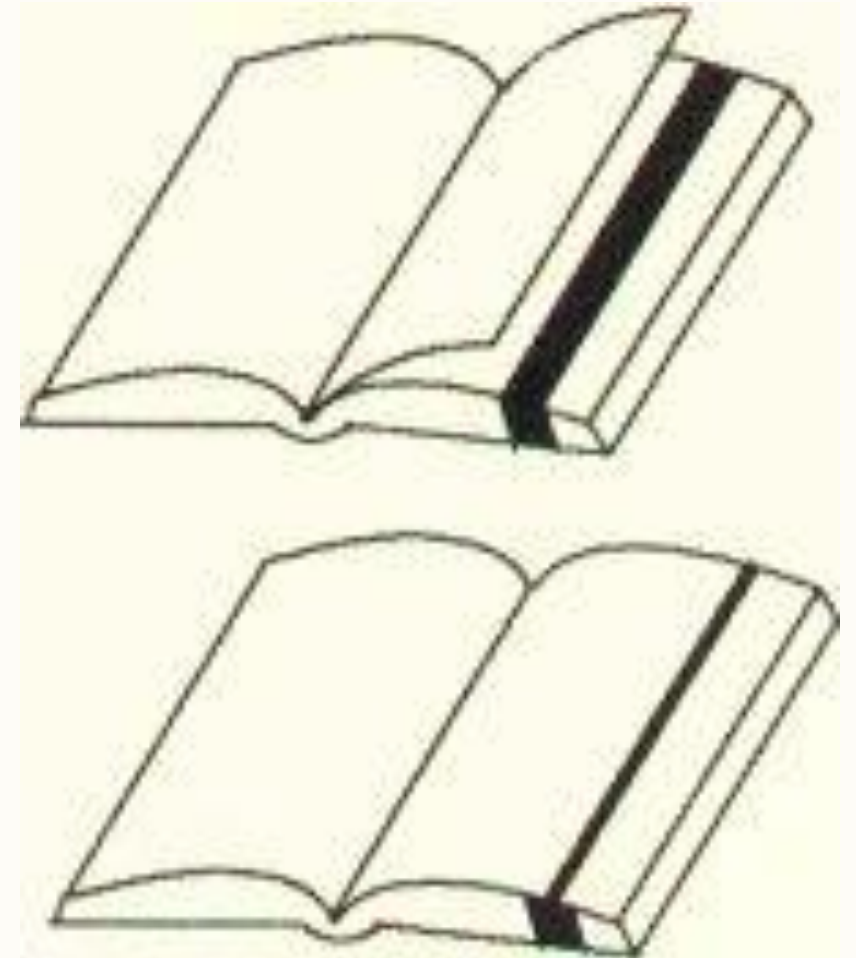


Book Straps



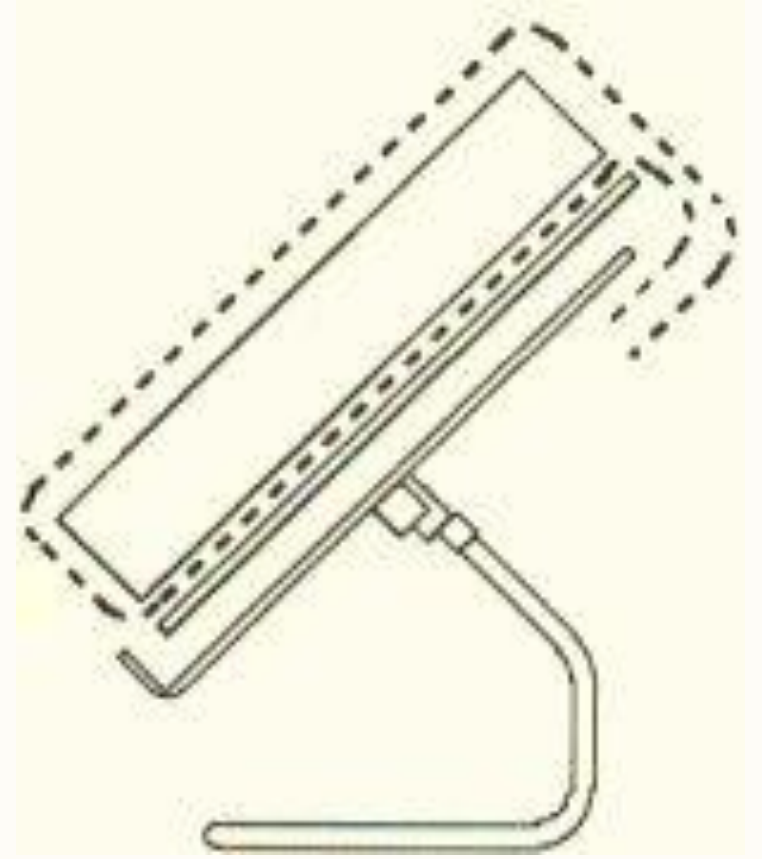
Use wide strap to hold the board or
bulk of the text block

Use second strap on top



Book Straps

SLING METHOD



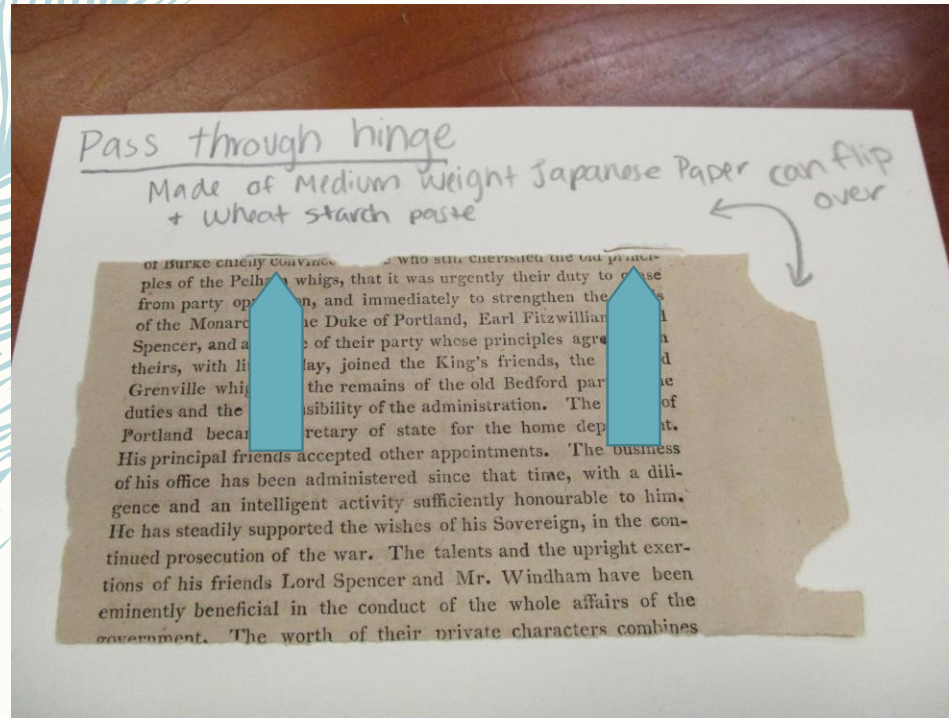




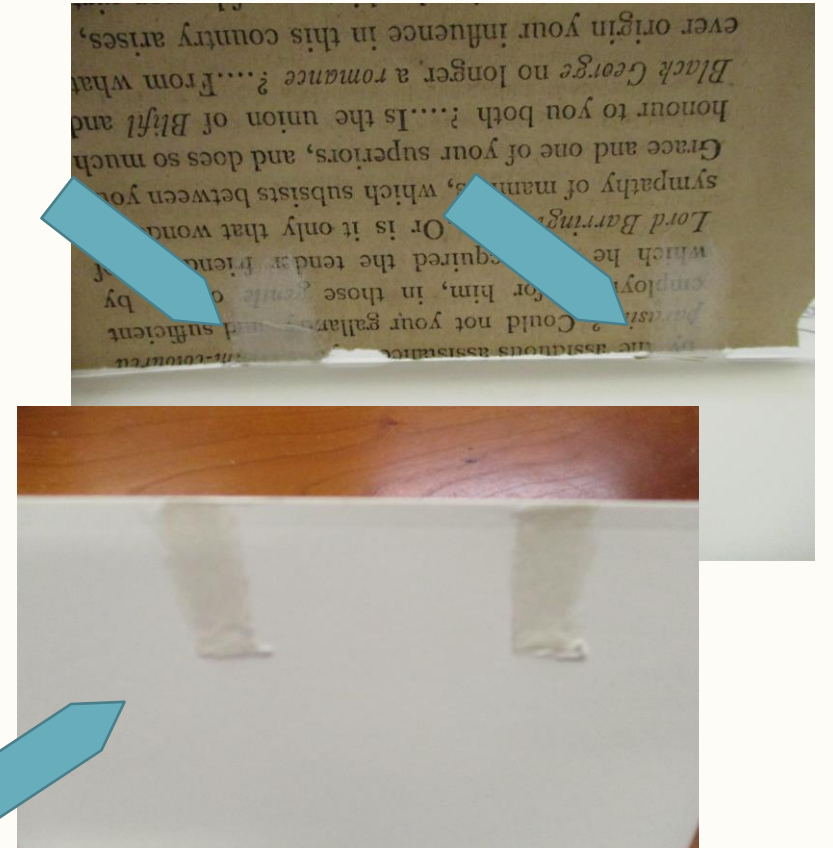
Flat Mounts

Pass Through Hinge

Object Front

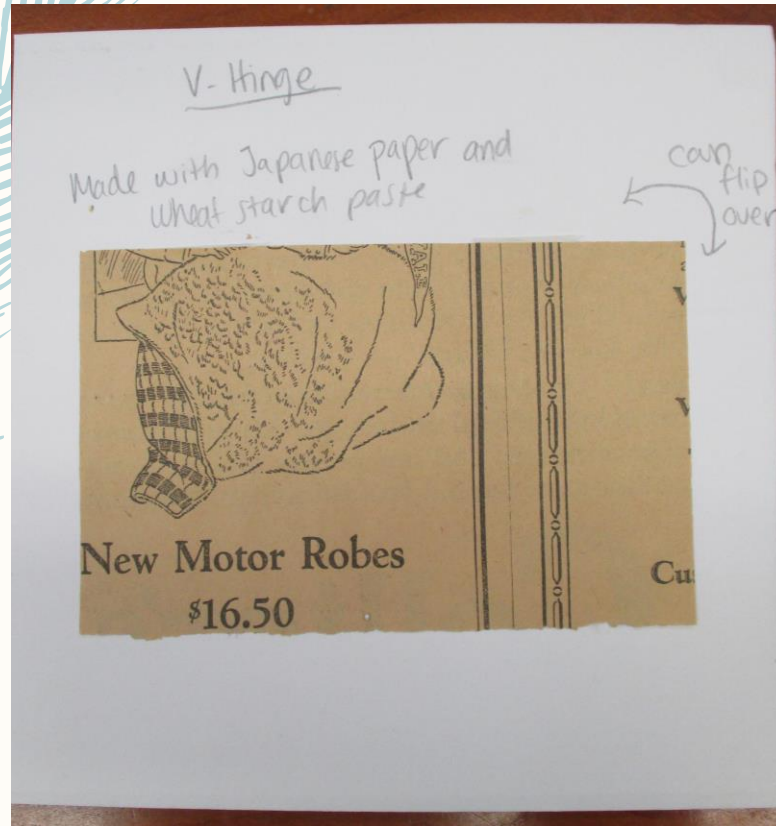


Object & Mat Verso

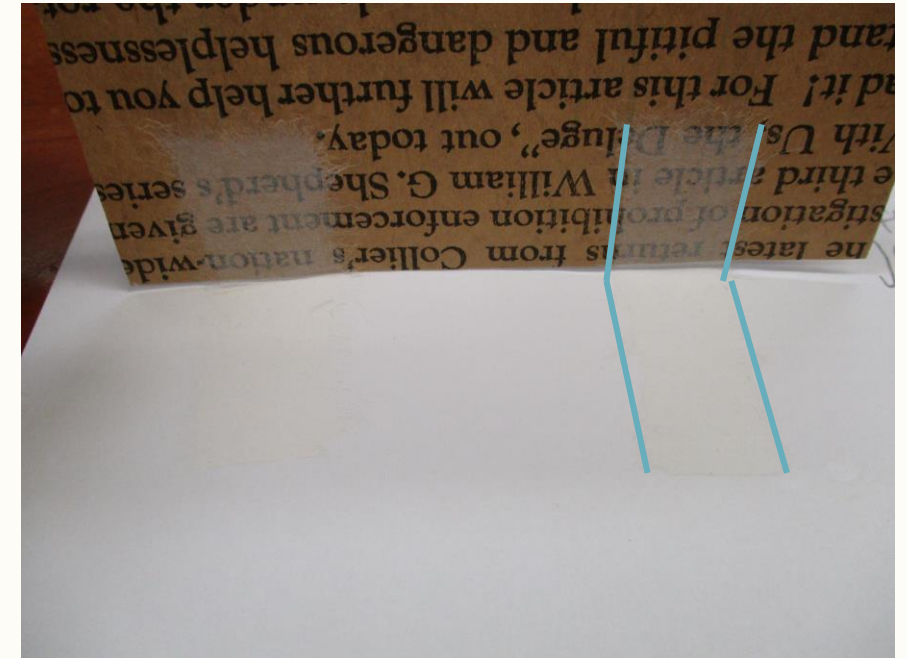


V Hinge

Object Front

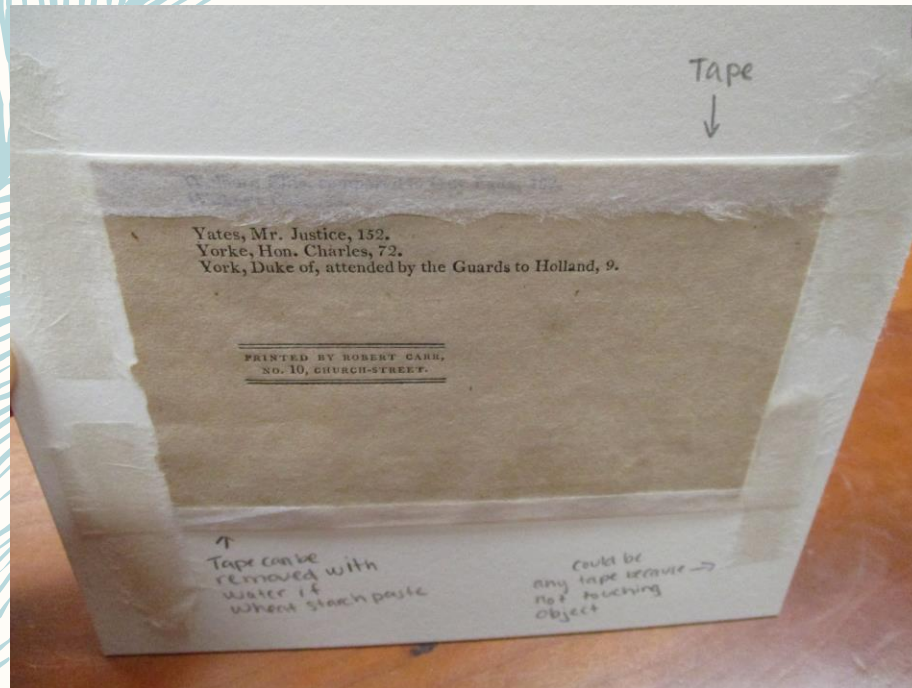


Object Verso

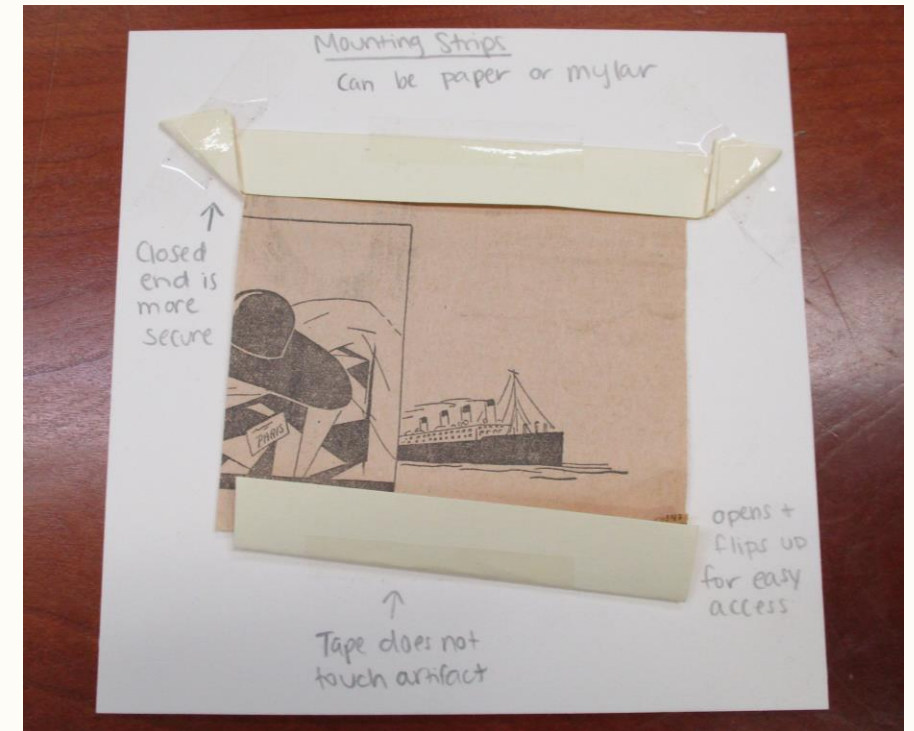


Mounting Strips or Channel Strips

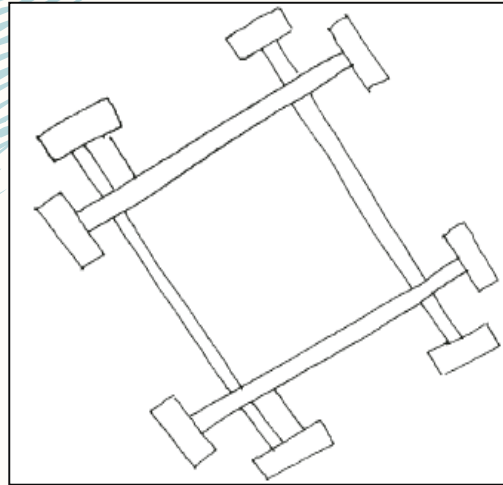
Japanese Tissue



Paper or Mylar



Edge Strips and Perimeter Mount



Corners



Edge Strips

Can be done with mylar
or other paper

1000 copies. 6,000,000 daily consultations.

For rates and space, telephone Cortlandt
official and ask for Advertising Sales Depart-
ment. Advertising forms close in a few days.

NEW YORK TELEPHONE COMPANY



Can flip open to
remove artifact

Photo Corners

can be made out of paper
or mylar

and as pleasant to touch as cara-
pet skin—comfortably warm for the
motor ride or the football game. Hand-
tailored of mohair plush and inter-
lined. Reversible—size 46 x 72.

EXPRESS ELEVATORS

Lord & Taylor

FIFTH AVENUE

ALTMAN
QUALITY SERVICE
VALUE





20. Desiderius Erasmus, 1469-1536.

[Moriae encomion]. *Stultitiae laus*. . . Cum commentariis Ger. Listeri, & fig. Basiliensis. Accedunt . . . Praefatio Caroli Patini. Vita Erasmi. . . Vita Hol. Dorpii. Epistola Erasmi ad Th. Morum. Epistola Th. Mori ad Mart. Dorp. Basileae, Typis Genethianis, 1676.

Rare Book and Manuscript Library
Gift of Howard A. Wolf

The Praise of Folly is the great Renaissance satire on learning, religion, and by the greatest of Northern Humanists. Simultaneously a playful tribute to More (1478-1535), at whose home it was largely written, its Latin title (the "praise of More.") This late edition reproduces Caspar Menant's (1627-1688) illustrations by Hans Holbein the younger (1497-1543), which survive in the edition still in Basle. Unusually, several of the illustrations, printed separately from the text, are pasted into the margins of the text. Other illustrations are printed more normally alongside, although separately from the text. The glue used to paste in the illustrations has damaged the paper of most copies. This is a nineteenth-century bookplate of the Marquis of Stafford as well as that of Howard A. Wolf.

Signage

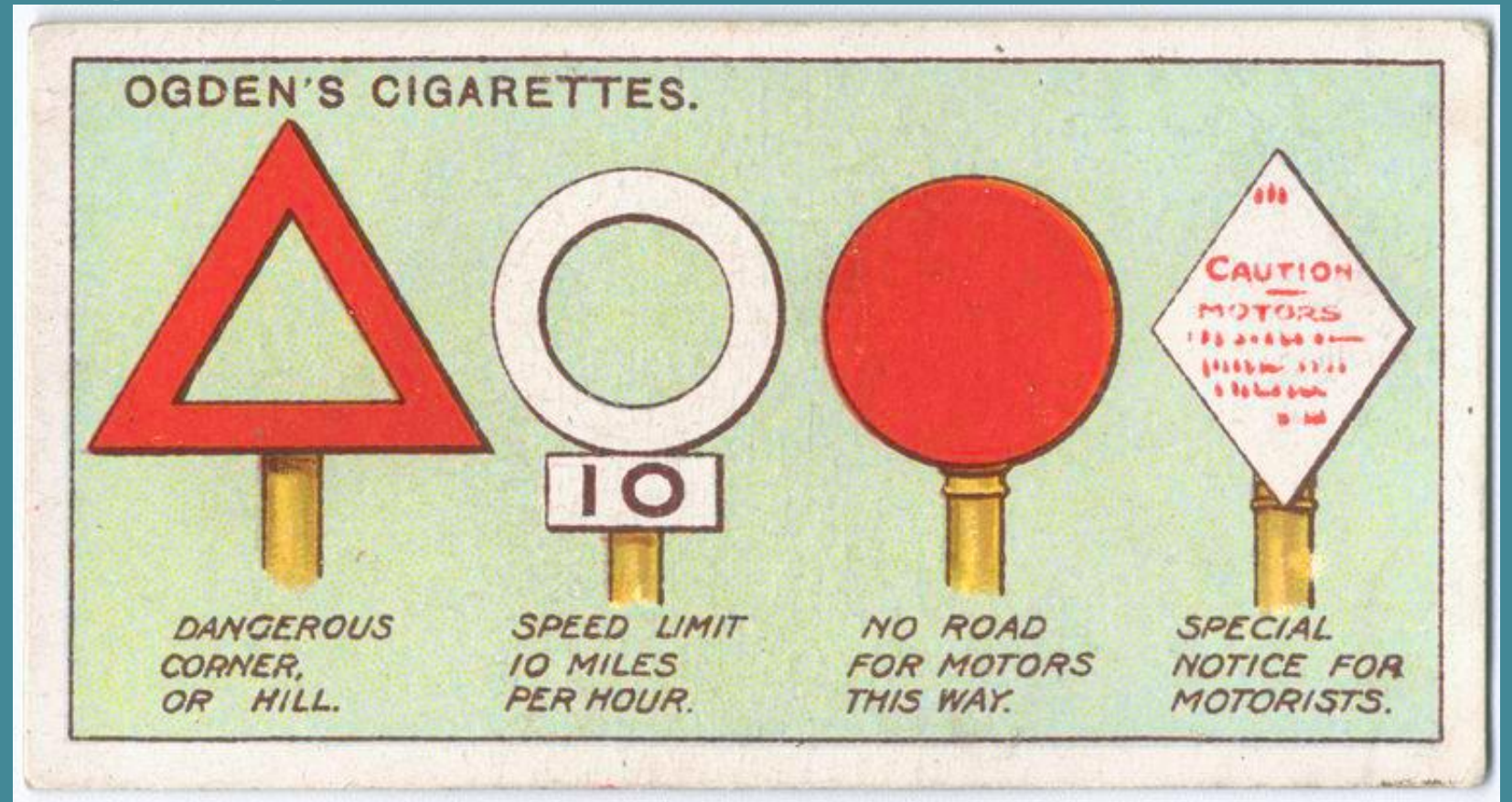
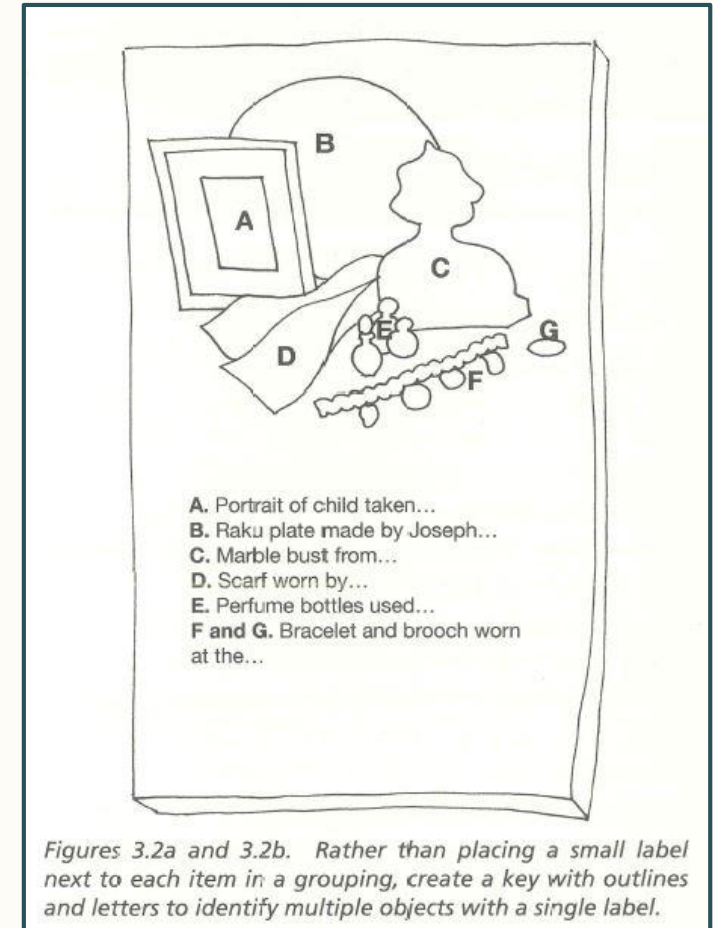


Exhibit Labels

- Always mount on a board
- Single item or a group of items
- Should be typed
- Clear and concise
- Less is more
- The most important information should be first.
- Proofread
- Don't go crazy with fonts and colors



From Exhibit Makeovers



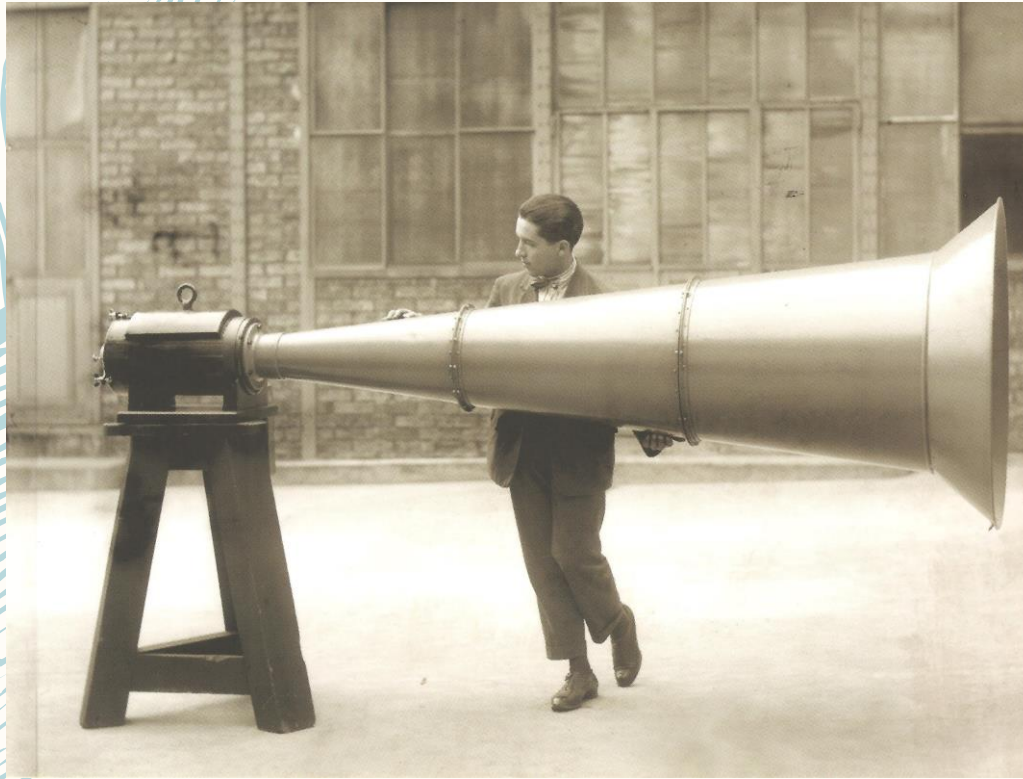
Accessibility

- All exits should be clearly marked and unobstructed by the exhibit
- Directional signage should have lettering 3 inches tall, with high contrast between text and background
- Wheelchairs need at least a 36 inch wide pathway
- Protruding objects should be no more than 4 inches deep
- Should have a rail at a low level
- Carpet and cords should be securely attached
- ADA standards www.ada.gov

Security



Communication



- Who is in charge of security?
- How to report damage or theft?
- How often should exhibit be monitored?



Safety

Public Safety

- Are sprinklers or fire extinguishers blocked?
- Fire retardant material for exhibition material
- Maximum number of visitors
- Are cords stretched across floor?
- Are staff trained in first aid?

Staff Safety

- Are there hazardous materials on display?
- Do you need more than one person for cleaning and maintenance?
- How many people should you have for installation and cleaning?

A stylized teal feather illustration is positioned on the left side of the slide, extending from the bottom towards the top. It has a central rachis with numerous barbs radiating outwards, creating a fan-like shape. The color is a muted teal or light blue.

Documentation

- Inventory
- Photo document the exhibit
- Loan Agreements
- Climate data
- Exhibition notes

Object Movement

Objects have “walked off” shelves and mounts due to vibrations from:

- Visitors walking
- External traffic
- Earthquakes
- Construction





Theft and Accidental Damage

- Secure the exterior – windows, skylights, doors
- Fasteners
 - *Security screws, wall fasteners (with fish plates for paintings)*
 - *wire*
- Barriers. Preferably cases that lock but stanchions, ledges, or tape can work too
- Don't place valuable materials near exits
- Make sure all visitors have left as part of the closing procedures
- Security cameras
- No food or drink. No food preparation

Resources

Caple, Chris. *Preventive Conservation in Museums*. Routledge, 2012.

Lord, Barry, and Gail Dexter Lord. *The manual of museum exhibitions*. AltaMira, 2002.

Parman, A., & Flowers, J. J.. *Exhibit makeovers: a do-it-yourself workbook for small museums*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2008.

Wythe, Deborah. *Museum Archives an Introduction*. Society of American archivists, museum archives section, 2004.

Inside the Conservator's Studio
<http://insidetheconservatorsstudio.blogspot.com/2016/03/mounting-quilts-with-magnets-for.html>

National Park Service, Conserve-O-Gram
<https://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/conserveogram/13-04.pdf>

North Carolina, Connecting to Collections
<https://collectionsconversations.wordpress.com/tag/exhibit-mounts/>

Northern States Conservation Center
<https://www.collectioncare.org/mounts>

Conservation Center for Art & Historic Artifacts
<http://ccaha.org/publications>



DHPS|NY

DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE
& PRESERVATION SERVICES
FOR NEW YORK

Questions?

DHPSNY staff is available to answer your questions. Contact us at info@dhpsny.org or (215) 545-0613.

Connect with us!



facebook.com/dhpsny



[@dhpsny](https://www.instagram.com/dhpsny)



[@dhpsny](https://twitter.com/dhpsny)