



## ART STORAGE: MORE THAN JUST ART

### What is the Art Storage Industry?

The term “art storage” itself can be easily misunderstood, as it is not focused solely on the storage of paintings and sculpture. In reality, art storage is simply superior storage. It is the type of storage that will best preserve the value and condition, and therefore enjoyment, of property for years and generations to come.

Property may include:

- Paintings
- Sculptures
- Prints
- Jewelry
- Couture fashion
- Vintage automobiles
- Antiques
- Furniture
- Wine

### Who Needs Art Storage Services?

A variety of individuals, professionals and institutions may need art storage services.

For example:

- Individual collectors may wish to preserve a painting’s condition so that it does not depreciate in value through accidental damage at home
- Art galleries may need overflow space while exhibits are in transition
- Corporations and foundations may need an off-site location for items for which a deaccession is planned
- Museums may need to upgrade their existing storage solution at lower rates
- Attorneys may need a third party to house a collection until a dispute has been resolved
- Home buyers and sellers may need a temporary secure space during the moving process
- Interior decorators may wish to remove property from a client’s home that the client is not ready to permanently let go of
- Fashion designers or couture buyers may need a clean and accessible location to store professional or personal archives



### What to Look for in an Art Storage Provider

There are several characteristics common to the best art storage companies:

#### 1 Security Against Theft

A properly maintained warehouse will follow strict protocol to protect against security risks of any kind. Cameras should monitor all areas internally in addition to external surveillance of the building's exits and surrounding area. These cameras should be monitored simultaneously by computerized motion sensors and live security personnel. Non-street-side covered loading docks can prevent theft during inbound or outbound shipping. Staff and visitors should only be allowed access to the minimal amount of rooms within the warehouse as necessary, and staff members should undergo extensive background checks.

#### 2 Security Against Damage

Storage for valuable items must also be designed to prevent property damage, especially fire or water damage. A state-of-the-art fire protection system is multi-faceted, with sophisticated heat monitors that are synced to alert on-site security personnel as well as the local fire department. An individual should be monitoring the system on-site around-the-clock to ensure that sprinklers are enabled only in requisite areas, thus preventing water damage from a false alarm. The warehouse should be wired to prevent the entire sprinkler system from activating simultaneously should a fire be confined to a small, manageable area. In addition, the building itself should be completely fireproof, using the latest in fire-retardation materials.

#### 3 Carefully Maintained Environmental Conditions

The proper preservation of your fine art and other luxury collectibles requires precise control of the environment, including air quality, temperature and humidity. Even a sturdy piece of furniture or a durable fashion garment can become warped under less than ideal conditions. The American Alliance of Museums recommends specific temperature and humidity controls that are ideal for the preservation of most objects. However, certain items, such as furs and wine, require different conditions. An expert storage provider will be able to explain these nuances to you and ensure that your property is properly stored.

#### 4 Redundancy Programs

Good art storage facilities understand that security and environmental measures must occur continuously in a fail-safe environment. Backup systems for every aspect of the facility – from the building's power to the personnel – ensure the continuity of service and protection of your collection.



### 5 Confidentiality

Confidentiality should be a fundamental concern when you evaluate art storage providers. Confidentiality not only helps to prevent theft but also protects you from unwanted solicitation from third parties such as galleries, dealers, auction houses or even the media. As such, it is crucial that all physical and digital records about both you and your property are completely secure and that all employees sign strict confidentiality agreements.

### 6 Good Location and Surroundings

A warehouse location in a city center is not ideal given the security concerns of today's world, nor is one in an area prone to hurricanes, tornados or earthquakes. Ideally, an art storage warehouse will be a stand-alone building so that its walls and foundations are not subject to the actions or conditions (such as fire) of the surrounding buildings and tenants. A gate surrounding the building is an important asset and can prevent damage from external security threats.

### 7 Accessibility

Good storage companies ensure that stored property remains accessible to you. You should be able to visit the facility and view the property in a comfortable setting with good lighting. You should also be able to effortlessly schedule last-minute outbound shipping to temporarily view property at home, work or an event. An added benefit that some warehouses may offer is an online collection management system that enables you to view images and information about your stored property, from anywhere in the world, at any time.

## Finding the Best Art Storage Solution for You

To ensure the best preservation of your art and other valuables, any art storage service you choose should offer the benefits outlined above. It should also go a step beyond, serving as a trusted partner who will provide passionate expertise, custom solutions and exceptional client service in order to preserve your beloved art and other collectibles for years to come.

*This article has been provided by the New York office of Christie's Fine Art Storage Services. If you would like more information about the art storage industry or about Christie's Fine Art Storage Services, please contact [storage@cfass.com](mailto:storage@cfass.com), call +1 855-55CFASS or visit [www.cfass.com](http://www.cfass.com).*

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