

Family Treasures in Transition

Become a Relevant Resource for Collectors at a Crossroads

Jennifer Souers Chevraux

Education Outreach Officer

ICA – Art Conservation

ICA receives generous operating support from:



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What is the ICA?



Founded in Oberlin 64 years ago and now located in Cleveland, we are the oldest non-profit regional conservation center in the United States.



ICA's approach to "Caring for Your Treasures" changed last year

Caring for & Sharing Your Family Treasures

Why are old things special, and why should we care?

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We identified a community need

New York Times, Aug. 18, 2017

RETIRING Aging Parents With Lots of Stuff, and Children Who Don't Want It

By TOM VERDE

Mothers and daughters talk about all kinds of things. But there is one conversation Susan Beauregard, 49, of Hampton, Conn., is reluctant to have with her 89-year-old mother, Anita Shear: What to do — eventually — with Mrs. Shear's beloved set of Lenox china?

Ms. Beauregard said she never uses her own fine china, which she received as a wedding gift long ago. "I feel obligated to take my mom's Lenox, but it's just going to sit in the cupboard next to my stuff," she said.

The only heirlooms she wants from her mother, who lives about an hour away, in the home where Ms. Beauregard was raised, are a few pictures and her mother's wedding band and engagement ring, which she plans to pass along to her son.



Tena and Ray Bluhm in their new home in the Westminster retirement community in Lake Ridge, Va. The Bluhms moved in to their new home in early August, and needed to sort through items to determine what they needed and could fit in the smaller space. T.L. WILKINSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

NextAvenue.org, Feb. 9, 2017

Sorry, Nobody Wants Your Parents' Stuff

Advice for boomers desperate to unload family heirlooms



By [Richard Eisenberg](#) Money & Work Editor February 9, 2017



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“I want to care for my treasures, but...”

None of the children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, neighbors, museums, historical societies, and libraries even want it!



<http://www.nextavenue.org/nobody-wants-parents-stuff/>

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How are we poised to respond?



- Host educational programs
- Publish newsletter articles
- Share contacts and resources:
 - ✓ Appraisers
 - ✓ Auction houses
 - ✓ Museum/library colleagues
 - ✓ Research on relevant topics

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What do we know about preservation?



Preventative, pro-active activities, which improve a collection's environmental conditions, and extend the lifespan of objects.

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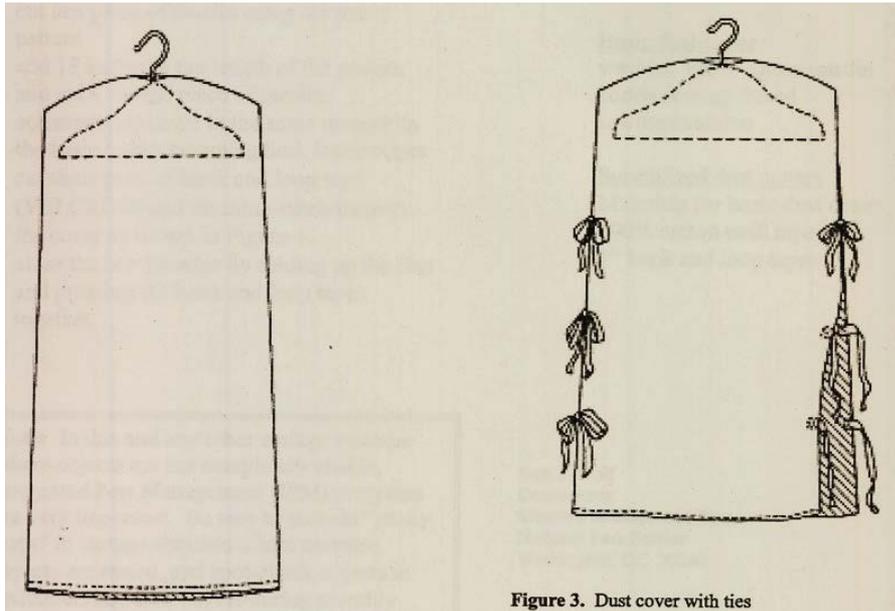
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Collection Preservation Basics

- Practice proper care and handling
- Provide environmental control
- Reduce light exposure
- Watch for water damage and mold
- Control for pests



Use padded hangers & dust covers



Kits available from HangerBee
exhibitsmith.com/hangerbee

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Encapsulation NOT LAMINATION!



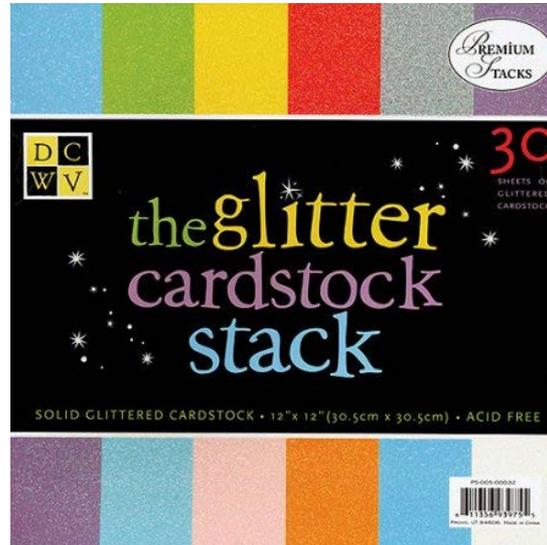
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Be skeptical of “acid free” label

Matting and housing materials should be:

- Acid free and **LIGNIN FREE**
- 100% cotton
- Fade and bleed resistant
- Buffered to maintain alkaline pH



Craft materials are not preservation-grade



Acid burn from improper backing board

Know when to call a professional conservator... and whom to call.*

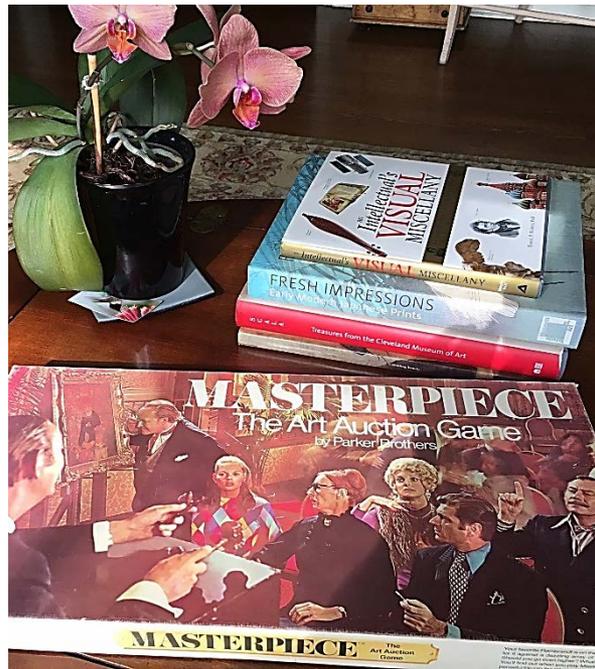


*Hint: ICA is Ohio's only nonprofit art conservation center

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How can we help collectors connect their treasures to the next generation?



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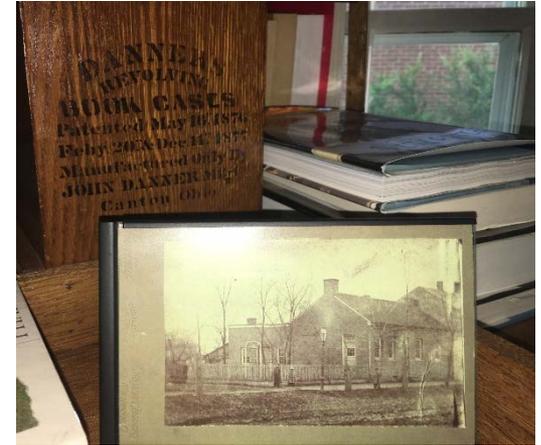
Set reasonable expectations

- No one can be expected to take everything
- Acknowledge the difference between heirlooms (treasures) and the “stuff”
- Accept that your passion may not be theirs
- Find common intergenerational interests



Select the best pieces to “make meaning” for others

- What are their interests?
Listen, learn, then make a connection to your collection.
- Vintage is in!
- Select something truly special to you.
- Share your memories and the connection.



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Document who, what, when, where, why, and how it relates to you



- Use cards, and write in ink that won't bleed, or in pencil
- Write out all names, full if possible, and use four digit dates
- Tie tags to 3-D objects, place acid-free cards in mylar envelopes with documents and photos
- **Tell the story!**

Presentation is everything

- Use “special” boxes
- Special occasions and holidays
- Housewarming, graduation, weddings
- It’s the thought that counts, but the package that makes it a present
- Have a plan for long-term storage, if it isn’t feasible in the short-term



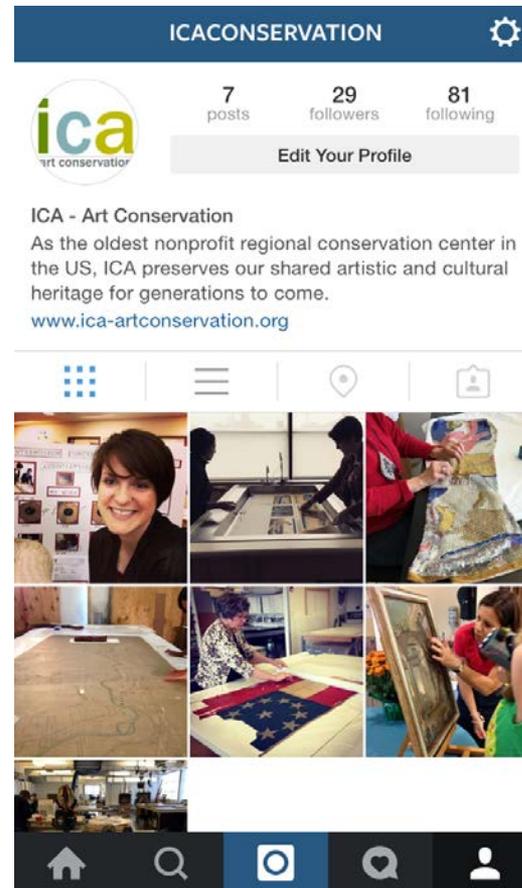
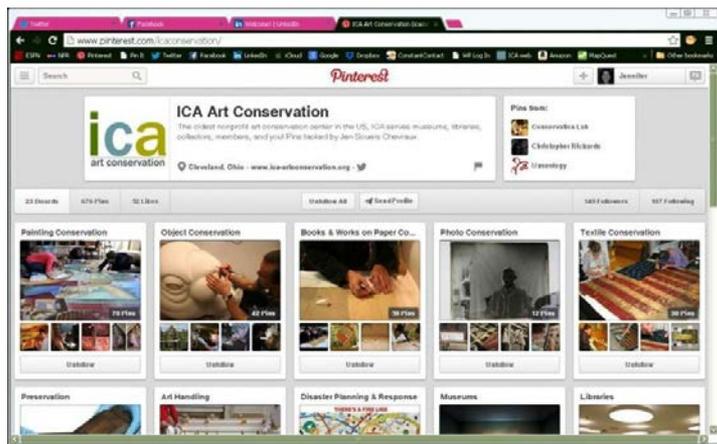
Encourage collectors to see the next generation in their treasures



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Follow ICA on social media for the latest program news!



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