

LOWERS & ASSOCIATES | INTERNATIONAL RISK MITIGATION PARTNERS

# Protecting Fine Arts & Collections

A question often asked regarding fine arts protection is, 'How does security for art, antiquities, or other works differ from any other form of commercial security?'. The answer lies in what is being protected, for the art items on display in a gallery may be priceless links to mankind's history and development; educational tools for generations past, present, and future; and more importantly, 'irreplaceable'. One cannot reproduce a Rembrandt, a Monet, or a Degas; yet losses of fine arts through theft, burglary, robbery, extortion, bombings, and fire have climbed steadily over the past several years.

A comprehensive fine arts protection plan concerns far more than simply theft or vandalism protection. A comprehensive security plan must concern itself with all risks and threats, while being fundamentally proactive in nature, preventing losses from occurring. Neither the institution nor the owners of fine arts pieces derive any benefit from a typical knee-jerk reaction, which accompanies an incident. The security plan should be prepared to manage any contingency at any time. The Lowers & Associates (L&A) program maintains this focus and is presented below.



## Risk Assessment

Review and examine all negative historical events, which include vandalism, theft, access control problems, key control problems, insurance coverage, criminal opportunity and crime analysis, and exterior, perimeter, and interior protection.

## Security Management

Review and evaluate present security department structure, lines of authority and responsibility, guard force recruitment, standards, and training programs, duties and prohibitions, budget preparation, and allocations.

## Security Devices

Analysis and evaluation of present system, types of devices used, distribution, quality evaluation, barriers, lighting, lock types, key controls, vaulting, files, and correspondence integrity.

## Policy Review

General operations, special events, gallery installations, storage facilities, loans, registrar functions, conservation, etc., as affects of the security program. L&A employs personnel having expertise in the area of high-value asset protection. Our staff comes from a variety of backgrounds including Federal Law Enforcement, Insurance, Banking, and Risk Management.



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## Situation Analysis

There is a critical need to reduce losses and damages for clients possessing rare and valuable Fine Arts Collections. The need ranges from inventory documentation and staff education to loss prevention and recovery.

Based upon the general understanding of needs, the Risk Assessment conducted by L&A, and subsequent Risk Mitigation Strategy, would include the following (as a minimum):

- Utilization and effectiveness of the control of carry-in items, e.g., backpacks, purses, parcels, and similar items.
- Control of access & egress through service doors, fire exits, and other entrances/exits that aren't ordinarily used.
- Review of department staff qualifications, training, and knowledge.
- Pre-employment screening of security personnel, curators, docents, volunteers, cleaning & maintenance personnel and others.
- Psychological barriers around protected items.
- Utilization of commonly accepted technologies to secure art work, such as vibration sensors, motion sensors, CCTV, wall-mounting security techniques, window/skylight alarms, Anti-Touch protection.
- Security of storage rooms.
- Control and administration of keys, key cards, biometric readers, or similar access control systems
- Adequacy of any collection cabinets, safes, or vaults containing covered items and access controls thereto.
- Library Security:
  - Access controls to rare book collections; Control and storage of personal items prior to access.
  - Documentation of persons granted access to rare book collections.
  - Restrictions on number of books checked out
  - Weighing of books and manuscripts when checking in and out.
  - Marking of books and manuscripts.
  - Inventory recording.
- Alarm monitoring and alarm response.
- Utilization of environmental sensors.
- Fire detection & fire suppression technologies.
- Utilization and training of security personnel.
- Emergency plans.

## Operational Footprint

