



Pastel Paintings Care, Matting, and Framing

Technically, pastel is pure, powdered pigment, rolled into round or square sticks and held together with minute amounts (enough to just form a stick) of methycellulose, a non-greasy binder. Modern science has improved the pastel since the days of Monet and Cassatt, removing hazardous heavy metals and creating non-fading pigments. In a modern painting, pastel is applied to high quality acid free or pH neutral papers. Some of history's most noted painters used pastels with lasting results. Pastels created more than 200 years ago, receiving proper care, are as fresh and bright as the day they were painted.

Pastel paintings and their color brilliance are very resilient over time, as long as the surface is protected. In order to prevent damage, the surface of a pastel painting should never be touched and should be protected from moisture. Pastel paintings framed under glass, with archival matting materials, provide the protection needed to preserve a pastel for hundreds of years.

One of the reasons pastel paintings are so beautiful is the quality of the pure color particles and how these catch and refract light. Because of its nature, the surface of a pastel painting cannot stand physical contact which would brush the dust off the paper. Pastel artwork should be protected from jarring and never be laid or carried in a face-down position because both of these actions can cause some pastel dust to dislodge from the surface. In the process of moving or shipping a painting you may find a small amount of pastel particles become dislodged from the surface of the painting. This is typical and in no way affects the quality of the painting. If you notice a bit of colored pastel has dropped onto the mat or glass, it is possible to carefully remove the frame, carefully clean the mat with a cotton swab or wipe the glass with a soft cloth and reassemble.

- This pastel work has been created on a surface developed specifically for pastel. This painting has been assembled with acid-free materials. Using acid free materials will prevent corrosive damage and yellowing over time.
- There is an acid free spacer which separates the painting from the glass. This will protect against rubbing and the possibility of condensation and subsequent staining should there be a rapid drop in temperature.
- This painting has been glazed with a UV glass. If you find reflective glare is a problem, non-glare museum-grade glass can be substituted by nearly any framing shop. Non-glare glass can affect the appearance of the image slightly. Plexiglas is not recommended for use with pastel paintings as static can lift pastel particles off the painting. When cleaning glass after framing, rather than spraying the glass, spray the cloth and wipe with a light touch.
- Framing is dependent on your aesthetic choice and interior design of your home. If you would like to change out the current frame, please consult a quality framer that knows the best methods for framing pastels. It is not recommended that you change the frame yourself.
- Rubber bumpers on the back of the frame allow air circulation, help keep the painting level once hung, and prevent marring of your walls.
- Hang all valuable paintings and photographs in a place that avoids direct sunlight, extreme heat, or high humidity.

Should you have any additional questions about the pastel medium and/or the proper care of your painting, please do not hesitate to contact Buttonwood Art Space.