



Displaying Art on Superyachts



Owners of superyachts often also own some of the world's finest art collections. Specialist fine art insurance policies have developed over the years with every aspect of the international collector's lifestyle in mind.

It is interesting that art insurance developed from marine cargo insurance in the early 1960s when it was noted that wealthy private individuals needed a specialty product for their art and antiques, the key issue being that art needs to be insured separately from ordinary 'general contents'. They took an 'inland marine floater' policy designed to insure merchandise whilst in transit or 'floating' and expanded it to cover artwork.

A client's insurance policy can be extended to include their yacht as a named location for artwork or indeed jewellery. Any insurance related tax would be payable at the rate determined by the country where the vessel is registered. [Yacht cover is available within the AXA Group.]

Yachts can pose more challenging and ever changing environments than is found in the modern home. Whilst the perils of fire and theft can be well controlled the marine environment is harsher and less stable than that on land. It is probably too obvious to state that it is important to select the correct, sturdy and stable, art in the first place and professional curatorial advice should be sought.

Relative humidity and temperature variation often give the greatest concern. Prolonged or continual periods of high or fluctuating humidity can lead to mould growth, insect activity, condensation leading to staining, cockling and warping and a change in the media, (blanching, blooms, bleeding etc.), effectively a more rapid aging due to the role that water plays in chemical reactions. Actions over time are not covered under any insurance policy; these issues are 'housekeeping' and collections management issues similar to insuring art in the tropics (Singapore being a prime example). Additionally salts have a corrosive effect which would be most notable on metals.

In order to combat these perils speak to your insurer about 'Preventative Conservation' which is often no more than practical housekeeping advice as demonstrated by the following three points:



- For art, suitable framing is crucial. Bespoke sealed enclosure framing uses barrier layers, sealed using foil tape, to make a sealed package with very slow rates of air-exchange to isolate the artwork from the surrounding environment. Frames can also include moisture absorbent material to control any moisture that does very slowly creep in through sealing, together with a humidity indicator card so that the relative humidity within the package can be monitored without un-framing, (through an acrylic backboard). Due to the aggressive environment, insurers recommend regular monitoring and periodic renewal of the framing materials.
- High levels of light, (measured in lux) is also to be avoided. Films can be added into glazing to reduce the harmful effect of ultraviolet light.
- Art has to be robust and secure as there will be inevitable motion / vibration on board any vessel. Artworks should be fixed to the walls either by simple mirror-plates or a similar security hanging system. Museum wax can be used on ornaments to reduce them shifting in a swell.