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Special Formats, Innovative Preservation Storage Solutions

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Available at: https://works.bepress.com/peter_verheyen/29/
Special Formats, Innovative Preservation Storage Solutions

Presentation Focus

- Safe storage of oversized and other special needs special collections materials

Discussion will include:
- Types of materials
- Challenges of the materials
- Storage options
- Transport and access
- Other considerations
Types of Materials

- Maps
- Architectural drawings/plans
- Posters
- Banners and related ephemera
- Panoramic photographs
- Framed works
- What are some others?

Challenges of Oversized Materials

- Awkward to store
- Difficult to handle
- Difficult to use
- Easily/often damaged during any/all of the above
Needs of the Materials – Art and Photos

• What are the materials?
  ○ Art on paper (or other substrate)
    ▫ Include fragile media such as gouaches, pastels, photographs
    ▫ Need to be stored flat
      ○ Matted
      ○ Encapsulated
      ○ Foldered (individually or in smaller logical groupings)
    ▫ Media can flake off, transfer, crack if improperly stored
      ○ Never encapsulate pastels, charcoals as static charges will lift media

Needs of Materials – Other Repro Processes

• Various reprographic processes
  ○ Blueprints...
    ▫ Under ideal circumstances may be best to separate due to chemical reactions...
  ○ Offset (such as posters)
  ○ Some drawings such as architectural, land surveys, maps...
    ▫ Often pen and ink on paper or cloth
  ○ Textiles
• Other?
Needs of the Materials – All

- Condition will play large part in selection of storage solutions
- Do they get regular use
  - Protection from wear and tear due to handling
- Where will they be stored and use
  - Ease of retrieval
  - Protection from wear and tear due to handling

What are Storage Options?

- Depends on size and space.
  - Foldered in boxes on shelving
  - Foldered in flat files
  - In tubes
  - Planhold type cabinets
  - Purpose designed shelving and cabinets
- How much space is available and what is available budget?
  - E.g., flat files for equivalent of 56 tube unit = $10,500 vs. $2500 and require 4x foot print when stacked 4 units high (8 ft)
Commercially Available Storage

- Oversized boxes
- Modular Art Panel System
- Art Rack (stackable)
- Corrugated Roll File
- Flat Files
- Triangular Roll Storage Box

Access and Transport

- What about access issues?
  - How will items be retrieved?
    - How wide are aisles/corridors?
    - How will they be transported?
  - How/where will items be used?
    - In same space as storage
    - In other areas
A Case Study: Architectural Collections at Syracuse

Syracuse holds the papers of many of the leading architects of the 20th century. Among them:

- Marcel Breuer
  - 130.0 linear ft.
- Pietro Belluschi
  - 453.0 linear ft.
- William Lescaze
  - 65.0 linear ft.

Collections include:

- Correspondence
- Writings
- Clippings
- Photographs
- Original Drawings
- Blueprint sets

While collections contain works that could be considered “art,” they are classed as papers and stored provided to patrons accordingly.
Architectural Collections at Syracuse

- **The oversized works**
  - Oversized was anything that did not fit in a standard document case or record storage carton.
  - Storage of these most problematic and challenging

- **Constraints**
  - Past practice / the legacy
  - Space
  - Money

Storage of Architectural Materials

- **Oversized materials stored in:**
  - VERY limited flat files
  - Wrapped rolls
  - Rolls in waste cansBoxes
    - Nicely folded in folders
    - Rolls packed in large boxes
  - Wardrobe boxes and just about anything else
Storage of Architectural Materials

- Oversized materials stored in:
  - Planhold cabinets
    - Received from architects with drawing clamped in cabinets...
    - Damaging to materials
  - Legacy tubes
    - VERY tightly rolled
    - Once out, did not fit back in...

Storage Options

- Flat files:
  - They’re works of art on paper and should be matted and stored flat...
    - Space
    - Cost
    - Staffing
- Larger Tubes:
  - Items wouldn’t be as tightly rolled, but still dangerous to remove and reinsert.
    - However, if system was changed... An opportunity?
An Opportunity

- Acquisition of the Werner Seligman Papers
  - Included an extensive slide collection, models, presentation boards, several boxes of photographs, specifications, competition programs, articles, newspaper clippings, reports, studies, and other items. Also included were several thousand drawings in approximately 230 cardboard tubes and bags, or in some cases, rolled with rubber bands. Blueprints, sepias, and original drawings on trace were mixed together.
    - Smaller collection(!)
    - Needed to be properly housed with few legacy issues that needed to be worked around.
    - Some money and lots of administrative support

Not Options

- Retaining original housings (or lack thereof)
- Flat files
  - To costly and inefficient in space use
  - Some items to large even for those
- Planholds or similar
  - Damaging to materials
  - To costly and inefficient in space use
  - Some items to large even for those
Learning From Others...

- If we roll the drawings around the outside of a tube, then...
  - Items easy to get off of tube
  - Not damage reinserting
  - Support items...
  - This method is common for the storage of textiles.
    - Image from Gaylord Catalog

And Applying To Our Needs

- Next we take that tube with the drawings wrapped around and insert into a larger one...
  - Mylar wrapper to secure drawings also protects against abrasion
  - Caps at both ends protect against dust...
Using The Materials

- Each unit holds 56 tubes in 3 linear feet of floor space
  - Tubes nested within each other for maximum storage density
  - Easy to remove from upper rows as well supported by inner tube
  - $2500 for 56 tube unit including construction costs
- Flat files would require 23 linear feet of floor space for an equivalent number
  - Files stacked 2 high @ 10 drawers each
  - Not wise to stack higher due to handling issues related to lifting out large items...
  - $10,800 = $1800 x 6 (double stacked 5 drawer units)
Construction Details

- **Storage units constructed using:**
  - 3 metal shelving frames
  - 1 x 2's and 1/2" plywood
  - By reusing surplus library shelving frames, we were able to easily ensure a very rigid and stable frame and reduce overall construction costs.

- **Inner tubes cut down by 2“**
  - Ensures that small diameter tubes fit into larger tubes with caps on both ends.
  - Endcaps protect against dust, and are adhered at the far end.
    - Labeled sequentially on removable end.

Phase 2

- **Based on success of original 4-unit prototype 15 additional units, 840 tubes, were constructed.**
  - Allowed return of materials stored on tables as they would not fit back into original tubes.
  - Allowed removal of legacy Planhold units
    - Materials transferred 1:1 (Planhold clamp : tube)
  - Allowed for rehousing of materials in legacy tubes
Phase 2 – Clearing the Planholds

Phase 2 – “The Wall”
Phase 2 – “The Wall” and Beyond

- 396 tubes required to hold materials from Planholds and “piles” in Special Collections.
- 444 tubes available
  - Filled with materials being rehoused from legacy tubes and other accessions stored in boxes...

To rehouse all materials at SUL will require an estimated 30 units beyond the 19 already in place.

SUL Resources

  - Article co-authored with Carolyn Davis and Debra Olson
  - Specifications for construction
  - Materials required sheet...

http://library.syr.edu/about/departments/preservation/resources/sam.php
Other Resources

- Archival Product Vendors
  - Gaylord, University Products, Hollinger-Metal Edge Inc, ...

- Storage Vendors
  - PlanHold: [http://www.planhold.ca/products.html](http://www.planhold.ca/products.html)
  - Safco: [http://www.safcoproducts.com](http://www.safcoproducts.com)

- Be creative, combine elements, ...

Recommended Reading

- LINE, SHADE AND SHADOW
  - THE FABRICATION AND PRESERVATION OF ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS
  - LOIS OLCOTT PRICE
  - To be published by:
    - Oak Knoll Press
    - Winterthur Museum and Country Estate
    - Fall, 2009

  Ideas for architectural materials and more…
Thank You

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