

Care of Encaustic by Willow Bader Fine Art

Encaustic paintings are durable and archival, due in great part to the fact that beeswax is impervious to moisture. There are many examples of encaustic paintings which have survived from ancient Greek and Roman times and which are almost as vibrant and fresh as if they were painted yesterday.

However, there are some things to be aware of when caring for an encaustic painting. As with all art forms, encaustic paintings should not be exposed to direct sunlight or extreme temperatures and care should be used when hanging, transporting, or storing. Avoid freezing and extremely hot temperatures. Hang and store at normal room temperatures. They will melt at about 150 degrees Fahrenheit or 65 degrees Celsius.

Please be aware that the surface of a painting can be scratched, or chipped. The edges of encaustic paintings are especially vulnerable to chipping. Take care when moving or transporting an encaustic painting.

A floating frame is a good protection for the edges and it is your best option as a framing presentation as it protects the edges and still allows for you to view the complete painting. Encaustic paintings on panel do not need to be varnished or protected by glass. If they are painted on paper or museum board or other similar support they should be framed under glass like all works on paper.

An encaustic painting may develop "bloom" (a naturally occurring hazy white residue) during the first six to twelve months as the wax cures. It may also occur if a painting is exposed to cold. Bloom can easily be removed by wiping the surface of the painting with a soft cloth or if the painting is more textured, the use of a hairdryer will remove it. Buffing or use of a hairdryer can be repeated as necessary.

If needed, the surface of an encaustic painting can be dusted with a soft cloth.

If you have questions do not hesitate to contact me at willow@willowbader.com

Willow Bader