

MUSEUM

MEAD ART MUSEUM, AMHERST COLLEGE

AMHERST, MA



Century-old collections preserved using unique storage solutions

Established in 1949, the Mead Art Museum, which houses the art collection of Amherst College that consists of more than 14,000 American and African works, world-renowned paintings and unique textiles, underwent a major renovation of its collection storage areas to provide improved preservation through segregated temperature and climate-controlled storage areas. The ASA member worked with the museum's collection manager to provide the optimum storage solution for its vast range of objects within each uniquely designed storage area.

“Now, with everything stored professionally using the most favorable preservation methods, we offer a more suitable environment for our collections and have the ability to accommodate growth in a safe and manageable way.” - *Stephen Fisher, Collections Manager*

PRODUCTS / SERVICES PROVIDED

HIGH-DENSITY
MOBILE

ART RACK

CUSTOM
SLAT WALL

TEXTILE DRAWERS

WIDE-SPAN

4-POST SHELVING

STANDARD &
OVERSIZED FLAT FILES

SPACE PLANNING

STORAGE
CONSULTATION





CHALLENGE With the collection expanding at a rapid rate, the museum needed to improve storage methods to provide adequate preservation and allow for additional storage space. Major collections were gifted, including more than 2,500 Japanese woodblock prints – one of the largest collections of its kind – and internationally renowned collections of Japanese, Russian and African art pieces. The challenge for the museum was to develop optimum preservation environments for each collection, including climate-controlled rooms with specially designed storage solutions.

SOLUTION The ASA member consulted with the museum's collection manager, recommended storage alternatives included high-density storage systems, four-post shelving, slat wall, drawer storage, art racks and other shelving solutions.

Using wide-span shelving, larger artifacts, such as furniture, sarcophaguses and statues, are raised off of the floor to prevent possible damage. Paintings and works-on-paper are stored on art racks and in a high-density mobile storage system that includes museum cabinets with flat drawer and shelf storage. Museum cabinets with specially designed drawers are also used to store rolled and folded textiles. To further maximize existing space, slat wall was installed around the perimeter of several rooms to hang artifacts of various weights and sizes, including decorative mirrors and larger rolled textiles.

Specialized collection storage solutions:

- Sculptures – wide-span shelving, slat wall
- Works on paper – mobile storage system with drawers, flat files
- Framed art work – art rack system
- African artifacts – wide-span shelving
- Decorative arts – wide-span and four-post shelving, slat wall
- Furniture – wide-span shelving
- Textiles – drawers, slat wall



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