

SECTION IX:

RESTORATION

Sometimes it is in your best interest to consider restoring a Piece. Now, think seriously about that routine which we have all been taught from early on: *do nothing to an antique, because you will de-grade the value.* That only pertains to true antiques, that you are **sure are true** antiques. That is a very tiny amount of the Art out there. You could have someone value the item in question. Okay, then there is all the rest of your Art, fine & otherwise. It should be up-graded, repaired, returned it to its Original sublime appearance. We have talked a few times already about; *"if it is not perfect; it is not Art"* How to return something to perfection after it is damaged is the substance of this next section.

Restoration means exactly that. One does not add to the item, in any way. That is blasphemy to change or add to the Artist's work. We, as professionals, are charged with returning the item to as close as possible to the Original (when new) state. If, the item is quite valuable or if the client has substantial funds, then the restorer will endeavor to find historically used medium to restore the Piece where it is damaged. As in, oil paints of THAT era, rather than commonly used Acrylic paints of the last 30 years. If the Piece is even older, prior to common use of oil-based pigments, one must go to huge effort to get the types of pigments used more than 200 years ago. For instance; frescos or egg-based hand ground pigments from Michelangelo's era.

Clear language: make it LOOK LIKE IT DID before the ravages of the ages, or outright damage occurred. In restoration of a two dimensional Piece of Fine Art, appearance is the objective. Even museum quality restoration is aimed at appearances. One can use 'commonly used pigments' i.e.; oils or acrylics to fill in chipping and

scratches, in nearly all cases. Your restorer will work slowly and meticulously to arrive at the correct color, tiny dot by tiny dot; until the damaged area is completed. He/she uses an exhaustive knowledge of pigments and colors, plus light and shadows to arrive at an acceptable appearance. It should APPEAR not new, but blend with the patina of aging showing on the remainder of the Piece.

The big problem arises when there are actually tears in the canvas. Now, we have another whole issue to address. There are people who do re-weaving of upholstery, yes? Well, likewise, there are people who do re-weaving of torn canvas on old & valuable Paintings. The best way to connect with these people is to ask at your local museum.

(Budget)... let's say the Piece is not eternally valuable, or you do not have the resources to pursue the re-weaving technical person. Have some crafty person (WHOM YOU TRUST EXPLICITELY TO DO GREAT WORK) working from the back of the canvas, which is now off the stretcher to allow the painstaking reconstruction to take place. You must relieve stress to the area, first off, REMOVE IT FROM THE STRETCHER, and wait a couple of days. This patient, EXTRAORDINARILY meticulous craftsperson, maybe yourself, will carefully bring all the threads into line as they used to be in the canvas. He/she then adds a tiny drop of glue circumspectly to hold the threads in their proper order, over many days with drying time in between. This will be done 3 to 5 times to assure a good, solid bond, with the glue. Use fabric glue. The slow drying variety would be best, to allow manipulation of the threads. If you've hired a real craftsman, the tear should not be noticeable at all from the front. Re-stretching back onto the stretcher is a bit dicey. It must be done quite slowly and with extreme care, after fully two weeks drying time. And prayer doesn't hurt at this juncture. Good luck!