

## Large Frame Restoration Poses Big Concerns

The value of the frame will be an important consideration. A restoration should retain at least 80 percent of the market value for resale purposes.

By DiAnna Tindell

If you have a very large frame that is damaged, there may be much to consider before deciding whether to have it restored. One is the matter of insurance. You may not think an insurance claim would even be necessary, simply because you don't anticipate the cost of restoration will be exorbitant. Unfortunately, this type of restoration can become costly due to the size of the damaged frame.

Such a frame will often need to be transported to a restoration studio. This may require the services of professional movers who are adept at handling large and weighty objects with delicate designs. The cost of moving the piece will probably be compounded by any insurance that might be required for the delivery. And let's not forget the cost of a return delivery as well.

You might try to avoid a transport fee altogether, thinking if the restoration is done "on-site," then less cost will be involved. But the fact that the restoration specialist would need to transport herself, her equipment and supplies to another location would have to be calculated into the overall charge of the job.

Another downside to work being done "on-site" is that your environment may not be conducive to a restoration project, given the odors, sanding, airbrush painting, draping, props, supports, equipment, etc. These are the natural by-products of such an endeavor.

The work may take longer than usual because of the need to first schedule the on-site visits. Moreover, several additional visits may be required because of the many processes that must have time to cure prior to the next step in the process. The mess and interruption caused by an "on-site" project may be much more than you anticipated.

The frame might be valuable because it gives you a great deal of personal satisfaction. This satisfaction may come from the beauty of the piece or some sentimental connection you might have with it. The frame could also be prized for its historical value, or because it is part of a collection of similar frames. Whatever the reason, the value of the frame will most assuredly be an important consideration when deciding whether to have it restored.

To be worthwhile, a professional restoration should retain at least 80 percent of the market value for resale. Therefore, another factor to consider is whether a restoration will accomplish this goal. Initially, you should research the value of your piece based on information found in books and on the Internet and from inquiries made to galleries, antique malls and auction houses. Can your frame be easily replaced, or is it simply no longer readily available?

You should also consider just how extensive the damage is to your frame. Even if it can be restored to your satisfaction, damage to more than 50 percent of the item may make it impossible to restore to 80 percent of its resale value. The value of an item vs. the cost of restoration is relative to many areas.

Keep in mind the more processes there are -- design work, variations of color, relief or sculpted work, enameling, metallics (gold, silver, etc.), needed replacement areas, the medium makeup, number of breakage areas, braces for reinforcement and



**Large oval framed mirror (approx. 8' diameter).**



**Damage shown of another area that has costly restoration detail design work to be done.**



**Damage shown of areas broken off frame.**



**Other areas of the large frame that require restoration.**



**Another area of the large frame that requires restoration due to damage.**

overall size of the item -- the greater the ultimate cost.

A large frame is going to demand more expensive specialty products for greater support in the reconstruction and more paints to apply to the broader surface areas. Some frames may be better suited for partial rather than a complete restoration. Sometimes it may be possible to negotiate with a professional restorer to work in stages, with the first step to make the frame whole again. This would be coupled with an option to submit the frame for a complete restoration at a later date, with the cost to be prorated accordingly.

Is time a consideration in your decision to restore? If an insurance claim is being contemplated, it is best to go ahead and request a cost analysis from the restoration studio, in order to collect the funds for payment in full in advance to the finished project. Insurance claims may be cancelled if left pending for a long period of time. Be sure the cost analysis includes the restoration cost, the estimated value after the restore and the "loss" of value, if at 100 percent. The claim may pay the loss percentage as well as the restore cost if prepared correctly.

Depending on the level of damage, the restoration may take six months or more. Therefore, if you intend to transfer ownership within a relatively short time, you may consider leaving the decision to restore to the new owner. Many items can be transferred "as is" with the research that determines the total cost and overall value after restoration.

Should the frame be considered un-restorable and/or totally wasted, please keep in mind that your frame may retain some value for its parts. Some parts, such as figural areas, flowers, finials, leaves, etc., may be just what is needed on a similar frame. Many restoration services will consider the purchase of those parts.

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