

Masterpiece Collector Chronicles

A Producer Information Resource from Your Chubb Collector Specialists



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FINE ART STORAGE AT ITS BEST

Gina Panella, Appraisal Consultant

Before advising clients on storage facilities, Chubb surveys the locations and assesses the level of protection. In the wake of the recent art losses that occurred at Momart, one of the most prestigious art warehouses in London, Chubb visited Fortress, a New York storage facility, where many Chubb clients store their fine arts. Fortress has three national locations in Boston, New York and Miami. Several members of the appraisal department in our New York Downtown office, along with reporters from *Forbes FYI*, *Worth* and *Fortune*, visited the Fortress location in Long Island City, NY.

The employees of Fortress take the security of their clients' valuables very seriously. Because of the extreme care and concern Fortress extends to their clients, the warehouse is highly recommended by Chubb and has also received the highest rating available for protection in the insurance industry.

Entry to this high-security facility is only granted to a client whose signature is on file, or a representative of that client who has been authorized in writing. Upon entrance visitors must clear security by signing and dating a visitor's pass.

Ursula Cornely, Vice President of Business Development, Paul Clark, Director of Sales, and Sigrid Thorne, CEO of Fortress, guided us on a tour of the storage facility. Fortress offers private vaults ranging from 100 to 4000 square feet, as well as common storage areas. All vaults are constructed of concrete slab and cinder block, and steel-enforced vault doors.

Clients often rent the aforementioned vaults because they can be customized to suit the needs of the collection. Paul Clark pointed out the warehouse is protected by a dedicated central station fire and burglar alarm system which features a wet sprinkler system, 24 hour monitored closed circuit televisions, and smoke detectors located throughout the building. It is also temperature and humidity controlled to ensure proper preservation of collections. For clients who would like to view their collection in a private setting, Fortress provides viewing rooms with

adjustable, museum quality track lighting such as the one below.



Fortress can offer clients such superior service for many reasons. All employees, including those involved with the packaging and shipping of collections, have fine art backgrounds and are bonded. All art handlers have acquired many years of experience in artist studios, art galleries and auction houses. They are trained in moving, installation, de-installation, conducting condition reports, digital photography and the use of the newest packing materials available. The trucks that are used for shipping and deliveries are outfitted with temperature and humidity control systems, high security locks and air ride suspension. Fortress also arranges international shipping via airfreight or ocean cargo. These are all criteria collectors should bear in mind when deciding on a warehouse to store their valuable possessions.

After the devastating Momart incident, clients and insurers can feel confident that valuables entrusted to Fortress are properly stored, handled with the utmost care, and housed in a secure location. For additional information on the Fortress facility, please visit their web site at www.thefortress.com or contact **Ursula Cornely** at 718-937-5500. For more information on other area warehouses recommended by Chubb, please contact Michelle Impey at 212-612-4027.