

Storage

FOR MUSEUMS

WORLD-RENOWNED ASIAN ART MUSEUM UTILIZES SPACESAVER FOR COLLECTION STORAGE AND PRESERVATION

Through an adaptive reuse project, the Asian Art Museum recently relocated to San Francisco's former Main Library, a 1917 Beaux Arts-style building known as one of the city's most important historic structures. The new \$160.5 million facility — designed by internationally renowned Italian architect Gae Aulenti — allows the museum to better protect and exhibit one of the largest collections devoted to Asian art, including nearly 15,000 pieces spanning 6,000 years of Asian history.

Although the renovated facility offered an increase in space of approximately 75 percent compared to the museum's former facility in Golden Gate Park — from 90,000 square feet to 165,000 square feet — most of the expansion is utilized by open spaces, exhibit and educational areas. Collection storage space was limited to the basement, where it is shared with conservation labs, exhibit workshops, and other functional areas.

Nancy Kirkpatrick, director of museum services, explained that because of the historic nature of the building, there was nowhere to gain additional space for collection storage. Expanding or changing the exterior look or footprint of the building was not an option. "Considering the building's size limitations, we knew that we had to use compact storage to give us the capacity we needed," she said. "We wanted to work with a company that could customize a solution to store our unique artifacts." After extensive research, they chose to work with Spacesaver Corporation and the local sales organization, **System Concepts, Inc.**

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— Nancy Kirkpatrick, Director of Museum Services

According to Kirkpatrick, the renovation provided an opportunity to improve the level of safety and conservation of the collection. "It was time to match the quality of the building and storage to the quality of the museum's collection," she said.

The new storage solutions provided by Spacesaver and Delta Designs were carefully tested and chemically analyzed to ensure safe preservation and storage compatibility.

Storage solutions include compact art racks for framed art pieces, rolled textile storage racks, stationary pallet racks for large statues,



Spacesaver compact storage increased the capacity of the museum's storage area and allowed space for other functional departments in the basement.

Solved



specialized cabinets for screen paintings and more than 200 environmentally controlled cabinets on high-density mobile systems for a range of artifact storage — some including drawers for small items. Spacesaver also developed a unique work surface solution to provide an expansive, angled shelf surface for easy viewing of large, flat or rolled pieces of art.

Collection storage includes:

- Stationary shelving — large metals collection, furniture and stone sculpture
- Cabinets — ceramics, statuettes, small metals, and jades
- Drawers — small ivories, works on paper, and scroll paintings
- Roll storage — textiles
- Case-type mobile shelving — library books

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Safety and preservation

It was important that the renovated building and preservation areas be seismically sound. Engineers designed a base isolation system to stabilize the entire foundation of the building. The mobile art storage systems feature vibration dampening systems and seismic safety stabilizers to prevent tipping.

The cabinets also provide protection through completely controlled storage environments that help to maintain a constant level of humidity and temperature. The silicone seals also provide an airtight storage environment that minimizes artifact exposure to dust, insects, and particulates.

“We are completely delighted with the Spacesaver solutions throughout our facility.” Kirkpatrick said. “They were there totally involved in the entire process. Everything was taken care of and it went seamlessly.”



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