

Physical Properties of Your Sarah F Burns Original Oil Painting

I take inspiration and guidance from the past, make art that reflects and documents our present time and in such a way that should last long into the future.

Methods:

I use fine birch panels, glue mounted on straight braces (I never use brads or staples that will rust and de-stabilize the work.) I then prepare rabbit skin glue which I use to mount natural linen gauze which provides a small amount of give that will prevent the subsequent gesso layers from “checking” or cracking. Onto the linen layer I put 5 or so layers of gesso that I have prepared myself using rabbit skin glue and calcium carbonate (man made marble dust). When the painting is complete I add a beeswax, turpentine and damar resin varnish, which is removable by archivists, should it become extremely dirty over time. This varnish is intended to be slightly matte, which is simply my preference. I’m not crazy about super shiny paintings. These methods are not perfect; no method is perfect. But with research, I’ve decided these ways give my work the best chance of survival over hundreds of years.

Care:

A rigid surface is said to last far longer than a stretched canvas or linen one. To ensure your painting will outlive your children, grandchildren, great great great grandchildren etc, simple keep it away from moisture and direct sunlight. A steamy bathroom or bakery will cause your painting to be compromised much sooner than a living room. Great fluctuations of temperature and moisture are also a bad idea.

If you’d like to clean your painting, use a soft but stiff brush to remove any dust that accumulates and if it needs a deeper cleaning you can try a piece of white bread, mush it into a small ball and dab and gently rub the surface of the paint. You can also try your own spit on a q-tip. Saliva is a gentle solvent and will get the dust without harming the surface of the paint. Do not use cotton cloths, they will leave bits of fabric and make an even bigger mess. Do not use alcohol, turpentine, acetate or other solvents. Let the professionals handle it if that kind of approach is necessary.

Interesting link on how to clean an oil painting -<http://www.wikihow.com/Clean-an-Oil-Painting>