



Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art Use ROKBOX for Local & International Shipments

Crystal Bridges owns a fleet of ROKBOXs and uses them for local and international shipments. We spoke to Head Preparator Dave O’Ryan who recognises the initial unfamiliarity in a new system, yet appreciates the ‘very clean’ process of using a ROKBOX compared to wooden crates.

How did you hear about ROKBOX?

After seeing some pictures of ROKBOX crates being used in Europe, I got curious enough to try to get a hold of ROKBOX through Instagram and LinkedIn. It took a while to make a purchase, but eventually we were able to map out a couple years worth of usage that would pay back the investment. I think it was a smart move for our institution.

What has been your experience of owning and using your fleet of ROKBOXs?

Our team has appreciated having the ROKBOX option. Keeping an inventory of crates for refit usage is difficult in some ways and we’ve found that the ROKBOX provides a simple mechanism for clamping in foamcore boxed or slipcased paintings, and that made it really easy to incorporate into our loan program.

How do ROKBOX reusable crates compare to conventional wooden crates?

I appreciate that the process for packing a ROKBOX is very clean. There is no need for cutting foam, glueing anything, repairing a worn out bolt receiver or “X”-ing out an old screw hole. The fittings and the lid closures feel very secure, and overall the packing process is satisfying.

Are there any challenges in adopting new crating?

Yes, mostly psychologically. Traditional crates rely partially on adhesives and partially on mechanical fasteners. Overall, the materials and the process are not dissimilar, but many of the simple actions like tightening bolts and friction-fitting a foamcore box within a foam cavity are replaced with very foreign clamps and an alternate system of shipping braces. When the muscle memory is not there, and one does not have hundreds of experiences with that specific hardware opening, closing, and not failing, it is a little hard to see it at first as an equally trustworthy system.

What would you say to other organisations who are considering owning or renting a ROKBOX?

I think ROKBOX provides a good option. You will not be disappointed by the security of the hardware or the ease of use.

Lots of people are evaluating the reusable crate systems from different angles. Some are focused on material life cycle analyses, some people are needing to keep their crate inventories to a minimum, some are looking for the simplest methods that work well for their most common types of media. In our experience, we often save some time and some material when using a ROKBOX vs one of our wooden crates from inventory, and that’s important to us, so ROKBOX holds an important place in the current crating field.