



Sarsfield Brooke Ltd.
SINCE 1998

CARE & MAINTENANCE OF GILDED PRODUCTS

Even though gilding is fragile, it has been used for centuries and is popular all over the world. What is important when investing in an item that has gilding / leaf is to understand what will or could happen over the life of the article.

Some of the worlds' foremost Museum & Art Gallery Restorers have completed extensive studies into the life and behaviour of this beautiful product as they work with this product on a daily basis & need to understand it.

The main thing to note as a result of these studies is that some gilded items crack and others do not. The main contributor to this instability is movement of the substrate. It is important to note that two materials are trying to work together. One wood (organic) and one metal (nonorganic). When humidity occurs we can begin to see cracks or movement in the gilding & this is considered natural & part of its enduring characteristics.

As noted above it is the humidity in homes and buildings is the big influencer. It affects the wood more than the gilding but the gilding is glued to the wood so has very little option other than to follow the grain of the wood as humidity affects it. This can result in small cracks appearing in some areas of the item.

When investing in one of the worlds traditional ways to decorate furniture, picture frame & decorative items, keep in mind that you are investing in the natural patina that can occur & a little care & love is needed.

Please see our suggestions with regards to its care so that you get the most of this gorgeous historical material while appreciating its character & developing patina. If you follow these basic steps and care for the item as recommended you should have many long years of enjoyment.

General rules for looking after Gilded / Leaf products :

Dust gold / silver leaf routinely with a sable brush (a soft, unused paintbrush) or a feather duster.

If your gold / silver leaf needs a more thorough cleaning, take it to a professional gilder. Leaf is applied either with water gilding or oil gilding and only a professional can determine which your piece is and then clean it appropriately. Leaf that is applied by



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water gilding will be dissolved by water. Solvent-based cleaners will do the same for leaf applied by oil gilding.

Don't polish or try to shine gold leaf as it might cause the leaf to flake off or remove the top coating. If pieces do come off, save them. No matter how small, a professional might be able to restore the item.

Store or place leaf items away from the sun where possible. Don't store it in a place like an attic, where the temperature and humidity are not controlled, as this can cause the wood underneath to swell or contract and potentially damage the leaf.

Finally, if you are planning to store or move a gold or silver leaf item make sure you wrap it in plastic or a product that will not catch on the leaf and lift it. You can then wrap it with more robust materials.

Do remember that this is a beautiful finish & has its own character that is widely respected as a mark of Luxury & Craftsmanship having been enjoyed in significant Palaces & Residences for centuries. What you might think is a negative is in fact its quality & is always sort after by leading Designers worldwide.

Allowing the gilding to age naturally & create its own character as it ages is recommended.