THE USE OF A LASER LEVEL IN CREATING CUSHIONING FOR THE TRANSPORT OF OBJECTS

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1. THE USE OF A LASER LEVEL TO TRACE AN OBJECT

There are many advantages in the use of a laser level during the packing of objects for transport. The example here is a small doll, dressed in a parka whose fur can be easily lost during manipulation. In this case the main advantage of the use of a laser level is the minimal manipulation that the doll undergoes during the preparation of cushioning. The laser level also produces a very precise outline, and can be used with a wide variety of objects, large and small.

2. TOOLS

- Level
- Photographic copy stand
- Sheet of paper
- Plexiglas, metal blocks and magnets
- Doll dressed in caribou and hare fur

3. PROCEDURE

While one person progressively sweeps the object with the beam of a laser level, which has been installed on a copy stand, the other person traces the contour of the object on a sheet of paper, following the path of the light. Step 1: The optimal sides to be traced are selected, according to the shape of the object. Step 2: A guide is used to pivot the object exactly 90°. This ensures that the outlines of the front and the side are properly aligned. Step 3: The object is traced. The larger the object the more distance is needed between it and the laser to prevent deformation due to the angle of projection.

4. CUTTING THE FOAM BLOCK

Two successive cut-outs are made in the foam block according to the tracings of the two sides. Two intermediate forms are thereby obtained: a negative shape which will be used for cushioning the object, and a positive form, which will be used for making adjustments in the shape of the final cushioning. Note that it is always preferable to work with copies of the original sketches.

5. STEPS IN THE CUSHIONING OF THE OBJECT

The close correspondence of the negative form of the foam with the shape of the object diminishes the movement of the object, and helps to limit abrasion and shock that can occur during transport. This type of cushioning works well with double crate packing¹. This system is illustrated below:

ANOTHER EXAMPLE – MODEL ARGILLITE TOTEM POLE

This object presents many challenging packing issues; the most compelling include its complex silhouette, its heavy weight (2.8 kg), and the inherent fragility of the argillite. These factors indicate vertical packing of the object, with a distribution of the weight over its base. The cushioning of the object resulting from the use of the laser level provides excellent support during transport.

Footnotes:
1. Six Steps to Safe Shipment with Foam Blocks and Magnets
   Corner Pads for Double Case Packages
   canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1444920447779
   Six Steps to Safe Shipment with Foam Blocks and Magnets
   MUSEUM-ARGILLITE.TOTEM.POLE
   ARGILLITE, 42.5 X 7.7 X 7 CM
   COLLECTION McCORD MUSEUM
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