



Article: A Guide to Fiber-Base Gelatin Silver Print Condition and Deterioration

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A GUIDE TO FIBER-BASE GELATIN SILVER PRINT CONDITION AND DETERIORATION

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Abstract

The author presents information from his research “A guide to fiber-base gelatin silver print condition and deterioration” conducted during his 2005-2007 fellowship in the Advanced Residency Program in Photograph Conservation at George Eastman House and the Image Permanence Institute.

The gelatin silver print was one of the most common forms of 20th century visual communication. From the fine arts to journalism to snapshots, gelatin silver prints are present in large numbers in museums, archives, and family photograph albums. Understanding their condition and deterioration at various levels of entry is important for the conservator, archivist, curator, and connoisseur. An understanding of the basic mechanisms of deterioration and their visible results yields great insight into the history of a print. It also brings deeper understanding of how prints should be cared for, and the result of their neglect.

“A guide to fiber-base gelatin silver print condition and deterioration” is a 41-page illustrated guide to how and why gelatin silver prints deteriorate, and includes a 2-page deterioration chart, diagrams, and photographic illustrations of 15 forms of print deterioration. It is available for download as a PDF file from the author’s website: <http://gawainweaver.com/library/>.

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