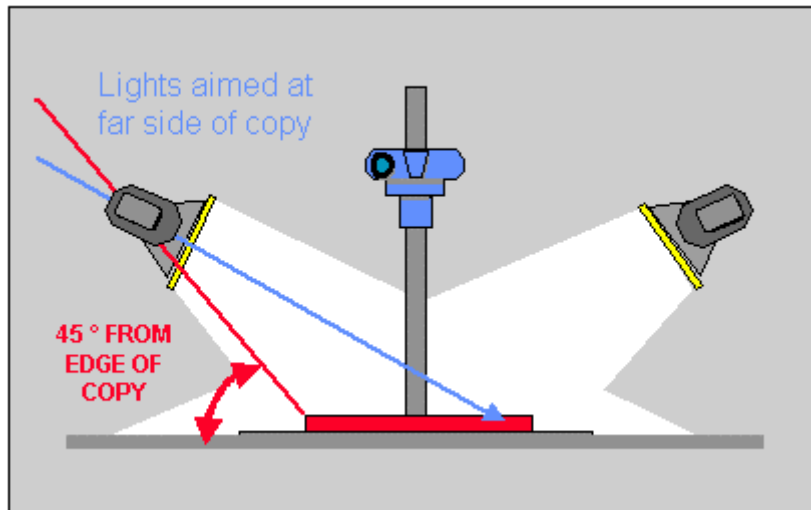
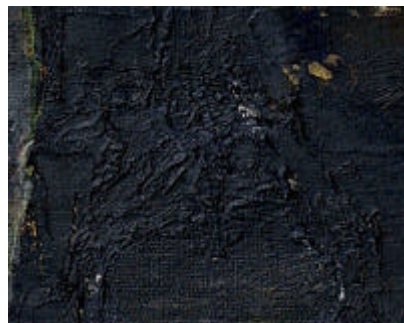
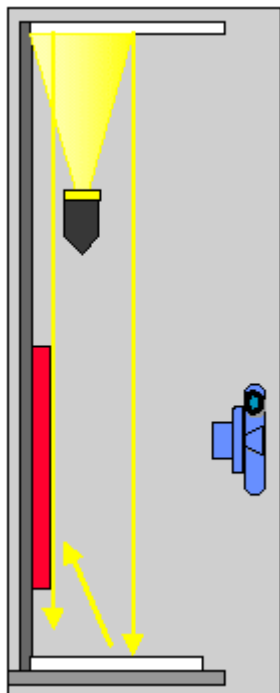


Some Standard Copying Techniques

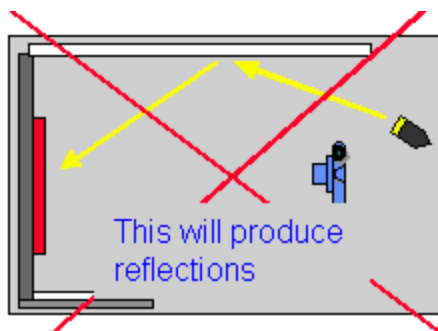


Standard copy setup-

Two lights at 45° off the edge of the artwork aimed at the far side of the artwork. The further away the lights are the more even the coverage. The same principals apply if the artwork is hanging against a wall.



Detail using bounced raking light



Raking Light

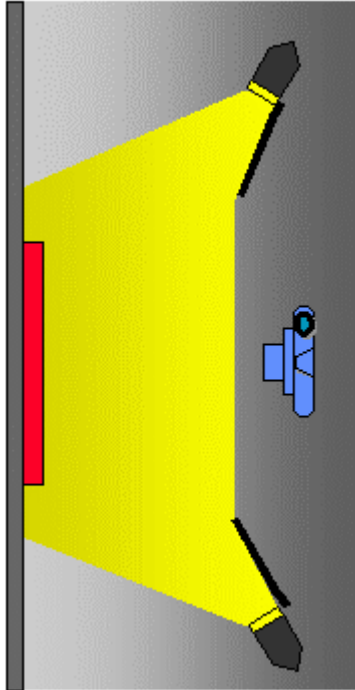
To emphasise surface texture and minimise reflections. Especially good for glossy black paintings.

Bounce light off a white reflector (ceiling?) *directly above* painting. (Bouncing off the ceiling *towards* the painting will promote reflections)

White reflector on floor to bounce light back minimising light falloff.

If light falloff presents a problem use a graduated neutral density filter to correct.

Bounce light off ceiling
above artwork



Photographing through glass

Use barndoors on the lights, or screens, to prevent stray light from illuminating anything you don't want to see reflected in the glass, which must be clean.

Use a long focus lens so the camera is further away from the artwork. With a telephoto lens you may be able to step to one side to shift a reflection without the parralax distortion ('keystoning') becoming too noticeable.

Use a wider aperture so the limited depth of field will render reflections out of focus.

Wear dark clothing, use a black tripod- avoid shiny camera accessories.

With small objects like daguerrotypes shoot through a hole in a sheet of black (or sometimes white) cardboard.



"crossed" polarising filters cut out specular highlights.

Preventing Surface Reflections

To eliminate surface reflections and shines, especially specular highlights on glossy textured paintings.

Place polarising screens, similarly aligned, over the light sources. (Not ideal with hot incandescent lights). Place a polarising filter on the camera lens aligned at right-angles to the light screens. (Check this visually by rotating the filter). The result will be visible in the viewfinder. Allow about 2 *f*-stops extra exposure if not metering through the lens.

Contrast will increase with dark areas becoming darker.



without crossed polariser filters



with crossed polarising filters

Eliminating surface reflections with a digital camera

When physical constraints prevent you from positioning your lights optimally, or when you cannot or don't wish to use polarising filters you can remove the reflections with your picture editing software.

This technique can be used to photograph textured glossy surfaces, (not just paintings) and through glass.

It does not produce the contrast increase obtained by cross polarising using film.

This is an ideal way to photograph miniatures mounted behind curved glass.

The technique consists of shooting two separate images, and using only the best elements of each image



Photograph the subject once with a light on the left hand side, and once with the light on the right hand side. The subject and the camera must not move between exposures.



Superimpose the two images as layers or objects in your picture editing software. Choose Darker or Merge if Darker.

If the two images did not contain overlapping reflections then all the unwanted highlights will be removed.

Combine the layers or objects with the base, then crop and tidy.

John Collier (Great Britain, b.1850, d.1934)

A Fallen Idol 1913

oil on canvas

Mackelvie Trust Collection,
Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki



Sculptures and Objects

Sculptures, particularly dark bronzes, present problems with burnt out specular highlights and dark shadows lacking in detail.

Bouncing two or three flashes off a neutral white or grey concrete ceiling gives an even lighting which does not attempt to interpret or dramatise the artwork, while capturing maximum detail.

White card or cloth on the ground around the sculpture helps bounce light into the shadows

Unknown

Peace (formerly known as A Roman Girl) 18th Century
bronze

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki,
Mackelvie Trust Collection gift of James Tannock Mackelvie,
1883

