Over the years I have modified this technique to address objects on thin or brittle paper. A repair acts to secure an area of loss or damage, but the repair must always be “weaker” than the object being treated. This can create visual integration problems when, for example, a fragile work like José Guadalupe Posada’s broadside prints, or a William Johnson screen print on brittle newspaper need fills and structural repair. In these two cases the repairs and fills were created using lightweight, pre-toned Kozo fibered paper. The objects were made more stable by this approach but it did nothing to visually integrate the fill with the object. The technique above was used to rectify this problem. An opaque paper was toned, generally cut to shape, and secured to the object’s back mat. (fig. 1)

The thin translucent fill attached to the object when laid over the opaque toned paper on the back mat, together made a visually acceptable combination that did not attract the eye, allowing the viewer to see the object and not be distracted by the repaired damage. (figs. 2-5)

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Fig. 1. After treatment, detail, bottom left corner: William H. Johnson, Jitterbugs II, ca. 1941, modified screen print, 43 x 46.5 cm, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Amon G. Carter Foundation purchase, 2000.11.
Fig. 2. Before treatment, normal light, recto: José Guadalupe Posada, Calaveras de caudillos de silla presidencial, ca. 1890-1913, etching, 40.1 x 30.2 cm, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Amon G. Carter Foundation purchase, 1978.52.

Fig. 3. After treatment, normal light, recto: José Guadalupe Posada, Calaveras de caudillos de silla presidencial, ca. 1890-1913, etching, 40.1 x 30.2 cm, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Amon G. Carter Foundation purchase, 1978.52.

Fig. 4. Treated Posada print next to mat board with toned and shaped fills adhered to back mat: José Guadalupe Posada, Calaveras de caudillos de silla presidencial, ca. 1890-1913, etching, 40.1 x 30.2 cm, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Amon G. Carter Foundation purchase, 1978.52.

Fig. 5. Treated Posada print with window mat closed: José Guadalupe Posada, Calaveras de caudillos de silla presidencial, ca. 1890-1913, etching, 40.1 x 30.2 cm, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Amon G. Carter Foundation purchase, 1978.52.