

How to Frame Your Art

Framing Your Artist's Image

by

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All too often you will walk into an art event and notice an exquisite piece of art, but then as you approach closer, the less you are impressed. The framing and materials that are to enhance the art actually detracts from its aesthetics. These mistakes unfortunately happen all too often.

In short, your framing needs to extend the message of your art whether it is a painting or photography, large or small. There is a great deal more artist sense in choosing these materials than there is actual technology. While aspects of protecting your artwork are important, the image that your materials help create in establishing your artist's brand is just as valuable.

Pay attention to contrast, composition and color of your painting in relation to its framing. Generally, it is not a good idea to simply match matting and frame choices to the colors in your art. The goal is to have your art stand out, not the supporting cast. In selecting colors, always try and move toward neutral tones that compliment your art piece. In dealing with black and white art works, black or white frames and mats are optimal.

In selecting mats, simple or classic mats are always preferred as they allow the art to take center stage while highlighting the art simultaneously. Mats should be wider than the frame up to double the frame's width, and the lower

matting should be a little wider than the rest. This adds a “weight” to the painting or photograph. Weighting creates a optical balance to the piece that is visually pleasing. In addition, dark mat colors tend to contain the art; where as light mat colors expand it. Depending on the size and type of art you are framing, you may prefer one of these over another.

The materials you choose for your framing and matting are also important for a few reasons. Certainly, these materials are to enhance your work, but also protect your toil and creation. Archival materials which do not contain acids that break down a painting are ideal. If aesthetically you have chosen not to have matting, archival materials are important to ensure your art’s longevity.

Mats of course provide protection of your piece from the frame and glass materials thus preserving it further. Photography and some paintings also utilize glass for this purpose as well as for other reasons. Glass, if UV resistant, can protect works from sunlight, and also glass provides protection from moisture and humidity.

Lastly, a frame choice should take into consideration who might be buying your art. Certainly choosing a frame and material that does justice to your art takes priority, but many people take into consideration the frame in matching their home décor. Elaborate and ornate frames may limit who would consider purchasing your art.

Natural wood is often a good choice from this perspective as it molds to many types of home styles, and it also can be painted or stained later. Again, the most important point is to match the style of your frame with your art style, but if

choices are available, considering a consumer's design choice shouldn't be neglected.

Your art is an expression of yourself, and your materials and framing should help support and not overshadow that message. In selecting these materials, take the time to finish your art in a manner that is truly holistic to the work itself.