

## Framing in the Third Dimension

The framing of memorabilia and 3D objects is considerably different than the framing of artwork on paper or in some cases simple fabric art and should be treated more as a 'project'. From the start it is essential that the framer discusses the 'project' with the customer to establish what is required; this also provides the framer with valuable time to work out how the 'project' is to be completed, the techniques and materials to be used, how long is it likely to take and any problems that might be foreseen before taking on the work. By working through these questions it can be established if one has the experience to complete the 'project' and finally, the cost. By getting these questions correct thereby completing a good, cost effective job will, without a shadow of doubt, enhance a framer's reputation.

The first, most important, question is how one should support the item. Is the item valuable in terms of cost and/or sentiment and therefore require conservation framing in which case reversibility is the key. Supporting the item effectively can be achieved with a little thought and it is good framing practice to ensure that whatever method of support is used, there is no damage to the item.

In many cases a framer might reach for either silicone or one of the many adhesives available; but first consider reversibility and that the item should not be damaged. Adhesives might be an option for ceramics but in some cases it simply will not work, so silicone should be considered as an alternative.

In many cases foamboard/plastazote can be used as a sink support whereby the shape of an item is cut into the board and the item is held in place by a mount.

Alternatively, the shape of the base of the object may be cut into the board which is then supported by a push or tight fit. With this method use layers of 5mm foamboard to support the item. Cut the shape of the base of item exactly into the top layer, then cut the same shape, only slightly smaller into the in the layer(s) underneath. Glue the layers together; cut a triple mount, and push the item into the shape. A frame package like this is perfect for demonstration purposes, where the item will be removed on numerous occasions, as it will ensure that the support remains tight.

The framing of fabric art often involves the use of box framing to ensure the fabrics don't come into contact with the glass; there are methods used in the support of fabrics that could be transferred to memorabilia e.g. the use of hidden stitches to attach items direct to mountboard, this might require the use of either thread or wire dependent upon the weight of the object.

The selection of moulding can cause problems as there are few with sufficient rebate depth to accommodate the whole framing package and consequently the framer needs to construct some form of box. The following considers two types of box construction; the use of FrameBox and stacked mouldings.

FrameBox is available in three interchangeable widths, 13mm, 19mm and 25mm. FrameBox is easy to use; the different widths can be cut to the size required and glued and pinned together to provide the depth of box required. It is important to remember that when using FrameBox the box is made before the moulding is mitred otherwise the resulting frame will be too small; further, a spacer will be needed in order to position the supported item. When finished the outer face of the box can be painted to suit.

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Stacked Moulding is a particularly interesting method of using two mouldings to provide a rigid/strong box.

First, select a flat moulding, the width of which should equate to the approximate depth of box and mitre it vertically down the width thereby providing the depth of box. Then the choice of moulding for the frame is mitred and joined as normal. The frame is then placed inside the rebate and secured using Framers Multi-points. This will then require the use of spacers in order to position the framing package.

Two mouldings stacked together can also allow for an object to be viewed from both the front and back; whilst the method is slightly different the principal is the same whereby the deep rebated moulding provides the depth of the box. The deep rebated moulding is mitred as normal and fits inside the frame with the glass held in place both front and back with the use of spacers.

In both cases the use of spacers is required to position the supported item such that it is kept away from the glazing. They provide an effective and flexible option in terms of size, colour and level of framing. With a little ingenuity they can also enhance the object being framed.

The construction and final assembly process is important; first, the object should be supported using the chosen method; the depth of box is then determined and the box made, this is a priority as it will determine the dimensions of the moulding used for the frame. The moulding can then be mitred, the frame made and glass cut to size. The framer can now decide whether or not a window mount is required so as to hide any cross section of box showing, once completed the spacers can be designed and made.

The frame, glass, window mount and box are loosely assembled and then the spacers are glued into place; the supported object is then placed on the spacers and the backboard secured using framers points. Assembly in this order enables the framer to check for and remove any debris inside the frame, once content the box can be secured to the frame using Framers Multi-points. The back is then taped up and hangers and buffers applied; to really finish the job the tape may be painted an appropriate colour.