

4walls

the magazine for art & framing professionals

MAL'S MASTERCLASS

Framing Canvas Art/Floater Frame

SILENT SALES

Create a 24/7 shopping environment



Mark Langley

An artist with an eye for the finer details

Autumn Greetings

FROM 4WALLS

Discover this season's rich pickings

Well what a summer we've had! With an unprecedented amount of sunshine bringing a collective smile to the nation's faces, the framing industry has continued to thrive. Of course, it wouldn't have been possible without your continued hard work to make your businesses shine as bright as the weather.

In this issue of 4Walls not only will we be celebrating some of your individual successes, but we will also look forward to the end of the year to offer you some wise words for keeping the summer boom going late into autumn and winter.

For those hoping to grow, we learn some valuable lessons in taking it slow with Scottish framing mogul, Tony Lawson, and we discuss the art of visual merchandising with our resident retail expert, Eve Reid.

Our Ask the Experts panel has once again stepped up to the challenge of tackling some of your tricky framing troubles head on, and there's another invaluable masterclass from the one and only Mal Reynolds.

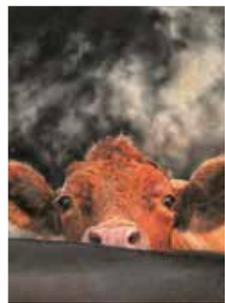
We'll also be talking 'photorealistic expressionism' with this issue's star artist, Mark Langley, and taking an in-depth look at the importance of Open Art Clusters.

And there you have it – another bumper issue of 4Walls! We really hope you enjoy your read and, as always, we'd love to hear your feedback and your own stories.

Pauline

Pauline Hutchinson, Editor

f 4Walls by Arqadia t @4WallsbyArqadia



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French Fancy

Make the most of the mellow tones associated with the Autumnal season and add warmth to your framing projects as wintry weather approaches.

Larson Juhl's striking, new Brittany range is inspired by the colourful, weather-worn finishes of homes found in the northern French coastal town.



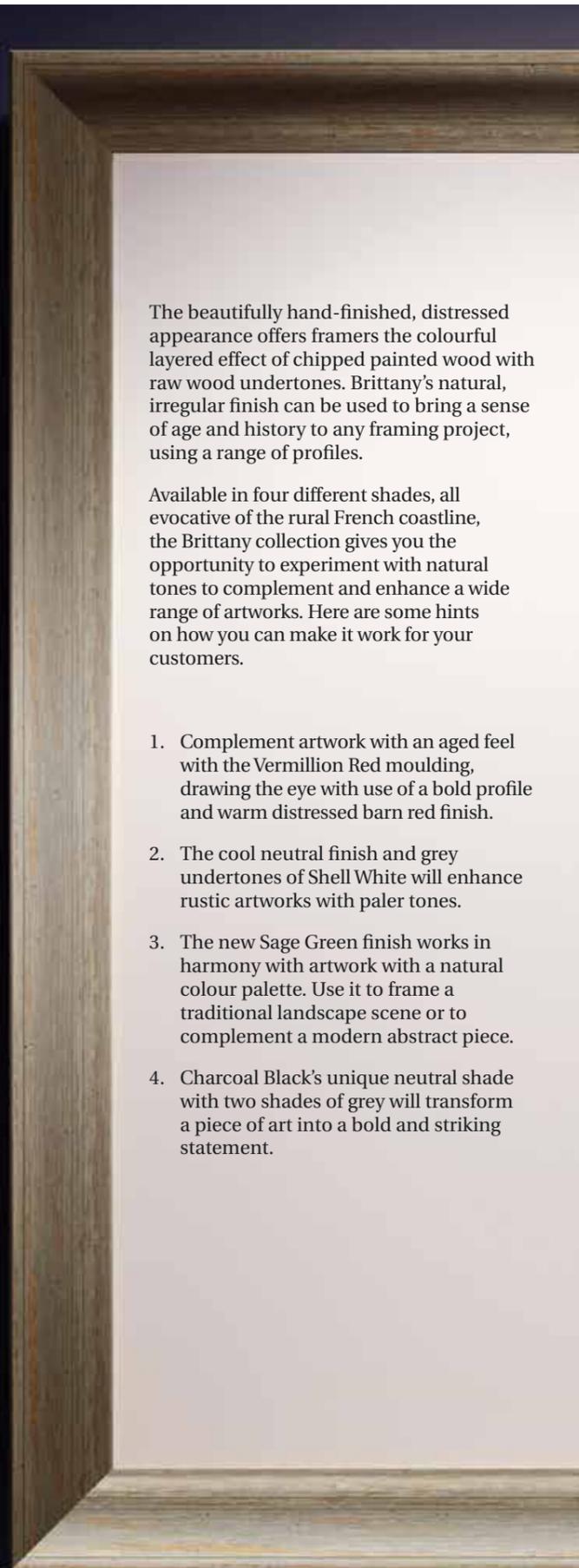
Did you know..?

Brittany is France's second largest historical region with 2,900 protected monuments – just losing out to Paris.

The beautifully hand-finished, distressed appearance offers framers the colourful layered effect of chipped painted wood with raw wood undertones. Brittany's natural, irregular finish can be used to bring a sense of age and history to any framing project, using a range of profiles.

Available in four different shades, all evocative of the rural French coastline, the Brittany collection gives you the opportunity to experiment with natural tones to complement and enhance a wide range of artworks. Here are some hints on how you can make it work for your customers.

1. Complement artwork with an aged feel with the Vermillion Red moulding, drawing the eye with use of a bold profile and warm distressed barn red finish.
2. The cool neutral finish and grey undertones of Shell White will enhance rustic artworks with paler tones.
3. The new Sage Green finish works in harmony with artwork with a natural colour palette. Use it to frame a traditional landscape scene or to complement a modern abstract piece.
4. Charcoal Black's unique neutral shade with two shades of grey will transform a piece of art into a bold and striking statement.





The search for

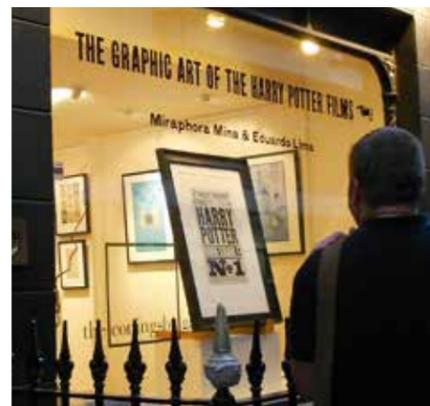
Britain's Best photo continues...

Professional and amateur photographers still have the opportunity to enter the Best of British Photography Competition to be in with the chance of winning £250 worth of Arqadia products. Entrants are invited to submit photographs which meet the theme 'Britain – what makes it great?'

Entries will be judged by a team of industry experts including Dr Michael Pritchard from the Royal Photographic Society, Louise Hay from the Fine Art Trade Guild (FATG), Andy Cole from Arqadia and Derek Poulston from One Vision Imaging.

Finalists' images will be professionally framed and exhibited at the FATG event in May 2014 and winning submissions will also see their work used in Arqadia's promotional activity and advertising campaigns in 2014.

Submissions should be sent to arqadia-art@htpr.com by the end of November 2013. Entries must be submitted digitally, at least 6 megapixels in size and in jpeg format. Entry is limited to one image per person. Competition winners will be announced in January 2014.



CXD Celebrates 21 Years

Conservation By Design (CXD), the conservation equipment specialist and supplier of the UK's most comprehensive range of conservation framing equipment, celebrated its 21st anniversary with an event at its Bedford manufacturing site last month.

Dozens of museum, gallery and library professionals enjoyed a day of seminar sessions hosted by some of the conservation world's leading figures. A number of specially invited industry experts from institutions including the British Museum and the University of Oxford were on hand throughout the day to share their knowledge with guests.

Topics covered included anoxic storage and paper conservation, as well as addressing some of the issues and discoveries that have influenced the sector over the last twenty-one years. Guests were also invited to take a guided tour of the CXD facilities to see first-hand where their equipment is produced.



Framing Company Helps with the Harry Potter Magic

Uckfield Framing Company (www.uckfieldframing.co.uk) has been working its magic with the world's most famous wizard. The company were called in to frame a number of spellbinding artworks at the The Graphic Art of Harry Potter exhibition held at London's Coningsby Gallery early this year.

The prints included Harry Potter "wanted posters", potion labels, a Quidditch World Cup poster and a decoy detonator. All are limited-edition reproductions based on the original prop artwork produced by graphic designers Miraphora Lima and Eduardo Lima during the making of the films.

Tim Benians, company founder, said the exhibition prints also used a "magic" glass, which is virtually invisible to allow the full beauty of the artworks to be appreciated.

The impressive collection also attracted the attention of actress Helena Bonham Carter who bought two of the framed prints to donate to each of her children's schools.

Did you know..?

The first spell Harry Potter cast at Hogwarts is 'Wingardium Leviosa', used to make things hover in mid-air.

Northampton Students Bring Poe to Life

Talented acting students at the University of Northampton created an eye-catching set using ornate mouldings to bring the Edgar Allan Poe classic 'The Fall of the House of Usher' to life on stage.

The Steven Berkoff adaptation of the classic tale told the story of a house, its ghosts and its ultimate demise during a three-day stint at the Royal & Derngate Theatre earlier this year. The students, directed by lecturer Trudy A. Bell, staged a physical theatre piece where the ornate picture frames were used to demonstrate the inhabitants' past.

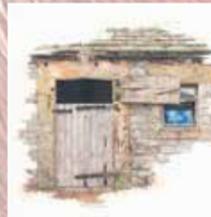
The mouldings for the eighteen frames used throughout the performance were donated by Arqadia and put together by director Trudy's father, Bernard Bell, a retired framer.



The delight is in the detail

Attention to detail is what Derbyshire artist Mark Langley is known for. Creating pencil studies which take anything up to 150 hours, his style is often described as photorealistic. But, inspired by muses ranging from the Pre-Raphaelites to 20th century architects, 4Walls finds out it's not so easy to pigeonhole this most talented of 'technical drawers'.

Mark Langley is always drawing and this has been true for as long as he – and his family and friends – can remember...



"I drew all the time as a child by all accounts – even when I wasn't supposed to!" he says. "Someone recently commented that their memory of me at school was the view of the top of my head as I always had my head down drawing.

"I really enjoyed art at school but I didn't realise I was particularly good at drawing until I was about 13 or 14. That is when I remember wanting to draw in detail. I had a love of old technical drawings of railway engines and started copying them. A year or so later I started copying photographs. I just had a real drive to capture all the detail. That's where what they call my photorealism began.

"After I left school I decided to go into something where I could use my drawing skills. I completed a YTS scheme at a print shop but I was pretty unhappy. I really wanted to try proper design so I enrolled on a BTEC course in design studies and then progressed to an HND at Sheffield College. I focused more and more on illustration and I began to explore the creative process a lot more.

"In my first graphic design job I used all my design and illustration skills working in different styles. I worked mainly in Photoshop and other software and hardly touched paper for several years. I enjoyed using a computer to create imagery and I suppose that still has an influence now."

Whilst working as a graphic designer Mark began taking commissions for animal portraits.

"In 2003, I had been working as a graphic artist for eight years and had been drawing people's animals for three years as a hobby, which generated a small income. Then I was made redundant. I was out of work for seven months and was having no luck getting another job as a designer, so I started drawing more. I used my drawing to escape a life that was getting on top of me, and to earn a bit of extra money.

"The following year, I decided to register as a business and started actively seeking commissions. I started taking my work out to small shows with craft tents. It was humble at the start – I only had about five pictures to show people – but what drove me was the escapism and the lure of being able to one day quit the day job for good. I just wanted to trade in something I knew I was good at.

"For several years I worked full time whilst building the business up. It was tough, drawing in the evenings after work and going to shows at the weekend. Eventually I had enough work to enable me to finally give up the day job to become a professional artist in 2009."

Now working from his studio in Belper in Derbyshire, Mark's portfolio encompasses architectural and transport studies and animal portraits working in graphite pencil and fine-grade colour pencil. His studies are made in painstaking detail with commissions taking anything between 10 and 150 hours.

Mark is a technician through and through and this shines through both in his own work and his artistic influences. Although he has a love of art, he is not drawn to the flamboyant pop artists of recent years.

"I don't like the modern art world, trying to shock and impress with just a concept; I find it rather depressing and soulless. Most of today's art is about the human condition, and those who do try to convey nature don't put across its beauty. I hope to be able to express the beauty that I see in the natural world, whether it be the expression in an animal's eye, the shape of the branches of a tree, or the texture of stone in a dilapidated building.

"I draw inspiration from artistic movements such as the Pre-Raphaelites, Arts and Crafts, and the Dutch Masters. The work of Alphonse Mucha, Charles Rennie MacIntosh and Frank Lloyd Wright also provide me with ongoing inspiration; I love their recognisable styles.

"I also love music from all popular styles and eras and I almost always have music on when I am working. I get excited by the hook and rhythm in imagery and in music – the vibe is important. I have to have the right sort of music on. I find that the music helps things flow."

Mark is still working on pinpointing his own style. "I'm not sure what I call myself really. The word photorealistic is often used but I am not sure that really expresses what I do. I am able to produce real photorealistic drawings that have that level of attention to detail, but as I get older I think 'what's the point in that?' I think real photorealism is shouting about being clever at recreating photographic qualities. That kind of work can feel slightly pointless because you are always second best to the camera.

"I like to express a bit more mood and atmosphere in my pictures. The phrase 'photorealistic expressionism' has been used to describe my work which is perhaps more accurate. I think my style is still evolving so I'll think of a name for it when I arrive there!"

Mark Langley will be exhibiting next at Ferrers Gallery in Leicestershire for Fine Lines and Animal Crackers. Full details of upcoming shows can be found at website www.mark-langley.com



Putting Art on the map

For artists, the opportunity to engage with and gain support from like-minded individuals within their local region can result in increased creativity and greater profile awareness for everyone involved. Countywide Open Art Clusters have been behind the development of a great deal of artistic talent across the UK. But one Leicestershire town decided to keep it much more local – and in doing so has really put its local art community on the map.

The Harborough Artists Cluster formed more than 10 years ago as a direct off-shoot of Northamptonshire Open Studios, one of the largest artist collectives in the UK. While many of its members remain involved in both groups, the smaller spin-off cluster has had a significant impact on the people of Market Harborough by recognising the breadth of talent within its relatively modest population of 21,000.

“We’re a small group of about 30 people,” explains Derek Brittan, long-time member and part of the cluster’s publicity team. “We are all very committed to both our work and our town and believe we have something very special to offer through promoting our art within our own community. It’s about celebrating each other and sharing art more widely for the enjoyment of all.”

“Within our number are some very talented professionals, such as Mary Rogers, who is well-known for her light-filled landscapes and still life work. We also welcome many semi-professional and amateur artists who benefit greatly from working alongside those more experienced than themselves. Together we like to push ourselves and challenge our own creativity.”

Like many other of the UK’s art communities, Harborough Artists Cluster hosts an annual Open Studio event, which takes over stores and galleries throughout the town, forming a unique route around Market Harborough and the surrounding South Leicestershire villages for people who love art. This year’s event took place in September and was entirely self-funded by the group.

“All our visitors receive a very warm welcome,” adds Derek. “It’s quite humbling to be able to offer people who wouldn’t normally get involved in our work the opportunity to experience a whole variety of exciting art and talk to the makers.”

“With the help of our sponsor galleries, framers and suppliers, we were able to not only run the Open Studio event, but also a Studio Trail through our members’ own studios, as well as ‘Art Windows’, which is a highly successful collaboration between Harborough Artist Cluster and local shops and businesses in Market Harborough town centre. All these events ensured that for one month, art, sculpture, textiles and photography became the focus of the entire town. It helped raise the profile of our group, and artistry as a whole.”

“I really believe events like this across the whole country make a visible difference to developing people’s understanding of art and raising the profile of local artists. And, of course, they are a very important part of our individual communities coming together. On a personal note, we are really proud to have established something so wonderful for ourselves here in Market Harborough. We would encourage others to try something similar in their own areas to boost appreciation of the talent on their own doorsteps.”

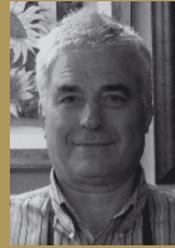
Mal’s Masterclass

Canvas Art/Floater Frame

Canvas prints have become a popular way of creating affordable, ready-to-hang artwork to adorn the walls of our homes using everything from pre-printed paintings to a favourite family photograph. Canvas artwork can also provide an effective way of covering large spaces on blank walls, making it an increasingly common choice for commercial interiors such as offices and retail outlets.



Mal's Masterclass Canvas Art/Floater Frame



How to add a little extra pizzazz to the presentation of your canvas artwork.

Here Mal Reynolds (GCF Adv) of Harlequin Frames takes you step-by-step through how to fix a 'floater' frame to canvas artwork. With his handy hints and advice, you will be able to help your customers make the most out of their canvas art with a professional and decorative framing solution.

Your step-by-step framing guide



1 Set Morso to required dimensions. Cut the stretcher moulding to make the frame around which the canvas will be stretched.



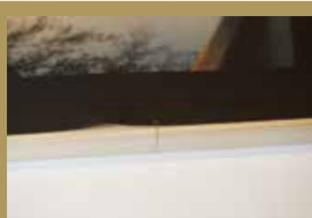
2 Use PVA glue to the mitres before joining.



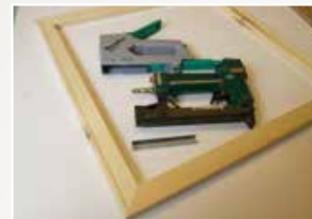
3 Set up the underpinner to join frame. Position pins and wedges to join the corners of the frame.



4 Using a ruler, set square and pencil, measure and mark the halfway point along each side of the frame.



5 Measure the half-way point along each edge of the canvas and line this up with the marks on the frame.



6 Use a staple gun and stretcher pliers to attach the canvas to the frame.



7 Starting at the centre point along one edge of the canvas, pull the canvas round to the reverse of the frame, being careful to align it with your marks.



8 Secure using a staple gun, working out from the centre point. Ensure the staples are inserted at an angle of 45 degrees. Use the stretcher plier to stretch the canvas around the frame to the reverse edge'.



9 Staple in place, working from the centre outwards. Repeat the process along each edge of the canvas.



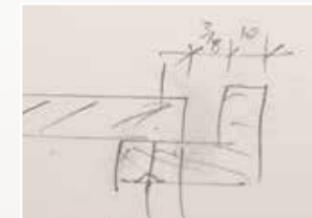
10 To secure the corners neatly, place the stretched canvas face down. Pinch the flap of canvas into a fold, staple in place, then fold and staple the remaining flap of canvas. Repeat for all four corners.



11 Cut the floater frame moulding to length, ensuring you allow for spacing around the canvas edge.



12 Join the corners of the frame using an underpinner.



13 On the reverse measure and mark the position of the screws which will fix the floater frame to the stretched canvas.



14 Use a small hand drill to create pilot holes for the screws.



15 Position the stretched canvas in the floater frame using foam spacers cut to the required size.



16 Secure the floater frame using brass screws, being careful to select the correct length. Remove spacers.



17 The finished job.

Materials used:
Stretcher moulding
221 500 000

Frame moulding
619 167 000

Size of completed frame
550mm x 550mm

Masterclass: next issue



Textiles come in a huge variety of forms – from simple cross stitches and clothing to complex embroideries and lacework, and from feltwork and patchwork to tapestries and prints on fabric. Materials used include open weave aida cloth and burlap through to fine silks and linen, and many textiles also incorporate surface embellishments such as beads and ribbons.

This diversity presents framers with a number of technical challenges as different forms of needlework will require a different framing solution. The items need supporting and may require 'squaring up' using methods that can be removed without harming the original piece of work. Conservation framing materials and techniques, particularly where historic textiles are concerned, should also be used.

In issue 11, Mal will take you step by step through the process of framing an antique sampler. His useful advice and handy tips will help you to offer your customers a professional and decorative framing solution for their textiles, and one that will also offer the best practice solution to prevent deterioration and conserving the item for posterity.



Silent Selling

In Europe, we don't like to talk to people; in fact 76% of shoppers never speak to a sales assistant when shopping. Good visual merchandising (or Silent Selling) is critical to a store's success, says Eve Reid, merchandising expert from the Metamorphosis Group. Here she shares her top tips for helping your business create the right impression and boost your sales.

In today's retail environment, image is everything. In business – as in life – it's the image you portray that will get you noticed and ensure you are remembered. It's important to convey the right persona if you are hoping to make a name for yourself and your business – even without the good old-fashioned art of conversation.

Visual merchandising is not just about making things look pretty; it's about making sure that products sell. Done well, it is an incredible lever that can have an amazing impact on converting more of your visitors into customers, encouraging your customers to shop for longer, and increasing the amount that each customer spends.

Think 24/7

The pace of life is ever increasing and working hours are breaking from traditional norms. People want to eat and shop 24/7, so retailers need to provide something for customers both during standard trading hours and when the shutters are down.

New technology means there is a huge range of possibilities for customer interaction including touch screens, QR codes and digital signage; but please don't underestimate the power of a good window display.

Linger for longer

Many retail stores tend to grow organically, which often means that the layouts become a little confusing. This is where space-planning really comes into play.

Your mission should be to create a layout that naturally guides your customers around the store, allowing even a first-time visitor to clearly see what you have to offer, and ensuring that the whole shop floor is used. Consider your customer's journey; make it stimulating and enjoyable.

Make it easy for me to shop

Designing a store requires a certain set of skills – an eye for colour, scale and proportion and good spatial awareness to name but a few. As a framer, you'll naturally hone these skills in your work. However, where most retailers go wrong is that they forget to think like a customer.

Customers are people. We all walk the same, move the same, turn our heads the same. In general, we all carry similar behaviours that impact on the way we shop.

Spend some time observing how customers move around your store to see if there are any barriers to sales. Changing the height of a fixture, or moving a key product into an area with a little more room can make a big difference.

Push me, Pull me

There will be products that you're known for, sometimes referred to as destination merchandise or 'pull' products. They will sell no matter where you place them (like milk in a supermarket). However, if placed cleverly, they will ensure customers walk through more of the store. The places within the store that have high levels of footfall passing them are called 'hot spots'. Hot spots can be used to actively 'push' products of your choice. These may have a short shelf life, be seasonal or be overstocks. Generally they are the added extras you want or need to sell. You just need to ensure you are picking the right products, at the right time.

Think Impulsively

Most people will only buy what they feel they need, unless they are shown something they can't live without. Remember that 50 per cent of retail purchases are unplanned. If that's the case, what are you doing to tempt customers into spending impulsively? Till and service points are an ideal place to promote additional purchases. Just think, if you can get each and every customer to spend just £1 more, what would that do to your bottom line?

A Long Road to Success

Given the rough ride the economy has suffered over the last decade, what makes entrepreneurs still want to risk their finances on a new venture? Here Tony Lawson from scotframes.co.uk explains how his long-term hopes have driven him to take the plunge with a brave expansion of his online framing business on to the high street.

Statistics show that some 50 per cent of new businesses go bust within five years of starting up. However, following a national drop in the number of business insolvencies this summer, confidence in a recovering UK market has started to grow. That's certainly been the case for Tony Lawson, who launched scotframes' first official premises in West Lothian this April after 14 years of framing from a small workshop at his nearby home in Bathgate. It wasn't a decision he took lightly.

"After working for close on two decades at home, it was something I needed to do," he explains. "Now, with both the new store and my website, the business looks bigger and stronger – and we all know perception is everything.

"It's not been easy, however. I took this on alone and have relied very much on the kindness of family to help mind the store while I undertake the work back at the workshop. I'm very much learning on the hop, but it's all about getting the experience.

I value my customers above everything, so I have been careful to make sure my service level hasn't suffered and I'm still meeting their needs.

"Most of my work has always come from word of mouth and to be honest, that is still the case now. Dealing mainly online in the past, I'm now harnessing this to look for new business opportunities and recommendations and to engage with customers. I have the website and Facebook up and running now and I'm getting a good reaction with what I am doing.

"Looking forward, I want to look into improving the website and social media activity, and perhaps

try some direct marketing too; but for the time being it's working, so I will look to strengthen those relationships before reaching out beyond my means or capability.

"It's all about balancing my resources. There's so much I want to do in the future – and not enough hours in the day! If I had extra hands I'd like to think I would be more dynamic with my displays and my marketing. I'd like to show-off everything I can do, build my concessions, be inventive – but for now it's about consolidation then slow, steady, sustainable growth."

One of the most lucrative activities Tony has undertaken since his expansion has proved to be getting involved within the local business community.

"I've joined a number of local business networking groups and have been humbled by how supportive other businesses can be if you only dare start-up that conversation. For example, a media company I recently met asked me to frame a collection of awards certificates. It was my biggest commission to date, and I don't think I would have even stood a chance had I not put myself out there.

"My ultimate goals for the business would be to one day not only have a joint store and workshop, but to also be able to create employment in the area. I'd like to be less hands-on and more creative, concentrating on developing new business and modernising the perception of framing for the younger generation.

"I do appreciate these things are a long way off. But I have already seen positive improvements since I made my business more visible, so I am confident in achieving my aims."

Top Tips for Growing Your Business...

- **Get out there** – Go to every event, speak to as many people as possible, make yourself and your business known. At some point, we've all had at least one person tell us, "I know someone who can help with that problem..." Make sure that someone is you.
- **Don't start something you can't finish** – Social media is a great tool – but ONLY if you update it regularly, engage with people and post information that is relevant to your business. Set time aside regularly – it doesn't have to be much at first; just make sure those minutes are spent wisely saying something positive about your business.
- **Be heard** – Consider entering local business awards; they offer a brilliant way of making yourself heard amongst peers and potential business partners.
- **Stay youthful** – Give yourself more time to be creative with your business growth strategies by getting help. It doesn't necessarily have to cost the Earth – consider for example taking on an apprentice, who you can mould and train to be as good as you.
- **Customer is king** – Serving your customers well and going above and beyond as often as possible is key to repeat business. Don't underestimate promotions to your existing customer base, they are just as important if not more so than new business.
- **Upsell** – this is a natural way to enhance the original specification/requirement of the customer. However, never upsell if this adds little or no value to the subject on display or is a level of specification the customer does not need.



Did you know..?

The most expensive painting ever sold was "The Card Players" by Paul Cezanne, which was sold for more than \$250 million.

Inspirational Images

Hundreds of people supported the Just One Word exhibition, hosted by the Willow Foundation to mark the 10,000th Special Day provided by the charity to improve the quality of life of seriously ill young adults aged 16 to 40.

The inspiring portrait collection, framed using products provided by Arqadia, featured Willow beneficiaries describing the emotional impact of their Special Day in 'Just One Word'.

Beneficiaries and their families, staff and volunteers, major donors, corporate and individual supporters were among those who attended the glittering preview and official launch events in central London in October. The two events raised more than £15,000 for the charity plus lots of offers of future support.

"The power of the photos and our beneficiaries' accompanying words really captured people's hearts," said the Willow Foundation's Suzanne Brennan. "So many more people will now understand the impact of our work. We also plan to use the framed photos at our ball in November, after which they will grace the walls at Willow House to inspire others. We hope that the whole project will raise in excess of £50,000 to benefit the charity."

The Willow Foundation was founded by Bob and Megs Wilson in memory of their daughter Anna, who died of cancer aged 31. For further information, visit www.willowfoundation.org.uk



Making the most of Autumn



As the leaves start to fall and the days begin to close in, the hazy afterglow of a surprisingly good British summer will have left many businesses buoyant and full of hope for a successful close to the year. But now is not the time to rest on your laurels. Autumn is the perfect period not only for reflection, but also to take charge of your business and give it the shake-up it will need to avoid the dreaded pre-Christmas slump. Here we look at a few seasonal ways to maximise your presence on the high street and ensure you make a strong start to 2014.

Take Stock: Take some time to look through your inventory and assess which products have been the big sellers for you over the summer months. Be sure to think about why they sold, and if they would still be as popular in other seasons. Adjust your purchasing strategy to suit. Remember – too little stock may lose you sales, but too much will be simply money down the drain. Rely on the facts and figures from your stock taking records, not on your instinct.

For items that haven't sold very well, consider how they can be marketed differently. Rethink their position in your store, or maybe how they are displayed. Read Eve Reid's article on (page 13) for further ideas. Could they be sold as a package along with other items or services? Up-selling and dual-product marketing are great tools for disposing of excess stock.

Colour Me Happy: What are your windows saying to customers at the moment? Autumn encapsulates the warm rich tones of the colour spectrum. Show passers-by just how fabulous these earthy shades look in a room-setting. Get them thinking about how they can be sprucing their interior décor in the run-up to winter with aspirational window settings inspired by beautiful autumnal themes.

An Education: The end of summer saw children return to school or take their first steps into the classroom, marking an important milestone for families across the country. Help commemorate this day for loving parents by providing a keepsake service. Whether it's asking local artists to take hand-prints which can be framed for the future or partnering with school photographers, there is an opportunity to tap into the proud parent pound.

Alternatively, think about the older children out there – those heading into further education, or flying the nest to go to university. With exam results, certificates and graduation photographs among a host of sentimental mementos, it's a good opportunity for you to showcase how these precious items can either be stored away for posterity or transformed into a commemorative piece of wall art. Consider building displays showing either conservation framing, or acid-free storage boxes to maximise the sale of concessionary items.

Festive Feeling: Finally, don't be afraid to be a little adventurous with your creative marketing in the run up to Christmas. Use this festive time of year as a hook to draw people in to an in-store event. Consider linking with a school to hold Christmas craft activities or run a competition for the best tree decoration or snowflake. Use their artwork to decorate your shop window or host an exhibition where families can view their children's creations. Be sure to display a host of suitable items for purchase to tempt these new customers into spending with you during their visit – or to return with items to be framed.

Did you know..?

In the final Back to the Future trilogy they fill the flux capacitor and Doc puts in the date 21.10.2013.

Marty says 'Doc we haven't got enough road'. Doc replies, 'Where we're going we don't need roads'.



Your questions answered

Ask the Experts



Mal Reynolds
Harlequin Framing



01
Front



02
Reverse



03
Edge with sellotape attached



04
Paper with folds

Q A curator from a local Regimental Museum brought what appears to be an Indian silk textile that has been backed with paper. It is over 100 years old and they think it was sewn by a relative serving in India with the Army. It has been folded probably for ease of transport or for posting at some time in the past and has developed pronounced folds. The paper is well bonded to the reverse of the silk – see images above.

1. The first image is of the front.
2. The second of the reverse.
3. The third is the edge with sellotape attached. You also see the paper has been folded over the edge, probably to prevent fraying.
4. The final image is a separate piece of paper that is with it, that shows the folds.

At some stage someone else has decided to try and flatten it out and they have attached it to hardboard with sellotape.

We have suggested mounting it in a cotton rag board and framing it with Tru Vue® Conservation Clear glass as it will provide a high level of UV protection. They want to

conserve/preserve it but also want to be able to see it framed. The Curator also suggested it might be possible to be ironed. They are price conscious but are aware it could be in the range of £300 or more to have it done.

A The silk looks to be an interesting item with the Union Flag and the Regiment's battle honours which might give a clue to its age which I suspect to be 20th or more likely 19th century; but of course it is valuable in terms of both Regimental history and sentiment. Whilst it is difficult to assess through pictures alone I would suggest that the first point that comes to mind is that a conservator should be approached/involved for the following reasons:

a. A general assessment of condition e.g. are there any signs of degradation? – many silks from the 19th/20th century may well exhibit signs of degradation due to the weighting of the silk which was commonplace in this period. This causes the silk to be susceptible to both acids and alkalis, temperature/humidity, heat and light. As a result, lengthways splits and cracks may occur along folds and creases. In such cases handling should be kept to a minimum.

b. The colour of the paper backing suggests that this may be acidic and as such one should consider either its removal or de-acidification.

If removal is possible then this should be replaced with either fine polyester monofilament thread or perhaps iron-on violine. Removal would be the preferred option as either of the two methods mentioned will provide strength and support. See reasons above. Sellotape etc should also be removed and any residue removed.

c. Should a conservator carry out the above process then the creases/folds may be removed to some extent if not completely.

If a conservator is involved then remember that if you offer to provide that service then you are responsible – it is often better to let the customer deal with the conservator directly thereby absolving you of any responsibility.

As far as framing is concerned you might like to consider the following – this is at FATG Museum level unless a conservation quality undermount is used:

a. Support. You may well be able to use normal 'T-hinges'. I have used these previously on items such as

this (some silks, batiks etc) and it has worked well but remember to use cotton museum tape (Arqadia ref: 999000031).

b. You are right to consider the use of Cotton museum board – Timecare® Heritage Board is the best option. I would use the unbuffered board as protein-based fabrics are tolerant to slightly acidic conditions rather than those alkaline conditions provided by buffered board. I would also use the same board as an undermount but, if not, ensure that any undermount is of conservation quality and at least 1100 microns thick. You may well decide to use a sheet of Melinex® or RIBS foil between the backboard and undermount.

c. Glass/Acrylic should also have a UV Protection factor of at least 97% and hence the Tru Vue® Con Clear falls well within that bracket.

d. Finally, if any slips are used or the moulding comes in contact with the fabric then these should be sealed.

Q Although I benefit from a successful business, I often wonder if I should be using tools such as Facebook and Twitter to further promote the services we offer. I have a minimal knowledge of using the platforms on a personal level, but no idea where to begin for my business.

A Used wisely, platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Google+ can build your customer base and grow your customer loyalty. However, there are a few golden rules to using social media as a marketing tool.

Firstly, remember that social media is a two-way street. If you're talking, expect people to talk back – so you must be prepared to listen and respond. Say something relevant and interesting and people will engage with you even more. Social media is a commitment; be prepared to maintain your online presence or you'll find you lose your audience's hard-won interest and loyalty very quickly indeed.

Secondly, maintain a good structure for your posts – regular, varied, and always on-brand messages. Your social media campaign should be like a shop window for your business. Think about how you want your customers to perceive you and build a plan of regular content around it. Social media users react well to a mix of rich content, so think about including lots of photosets or videos to stimulate reaction.

Finally, don't forget the whole point of social media is to communicate. Be aware of not only what you are doing, but what your customers and local community are doing also. Search for local contacts who are using social media already and connect with them. Support them by re-posting their collateral, engaging in their online conversations and exploring joint ventures with local organisations and the art community.



Steve Burke
Arqadia's Sales Director

Dates for your diary

Birmingham Museum, Birmingham

15th July 2013 – 31st December 2014

The Staffordshire Hoard

Made up of over 1,500 pieces of beautifully crafted gold and silver from the 7th century Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia, this exhibition tells the story of the hoard and the history of Anglo-Saxon Britain.

Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin

12 October 2013 – February 2014

In The Line of Beauty

In the Line of Beauty presents the work of some of Ireland's most exciting and innovative artists – David Beattie, Oisín Byrne, Rhona Byrne, Aleana Egan, Fiona Hallinan and many more. The exhibition examines artists' embrace of the beauty of objects, as well as their awareness of the ways in which beauty and materiality can transform experiences.

Hunterian Art Gallery, Glasgow

13th September 2013 – 5th January 2014

Allan Ramsay

This exhibition marks 300 years since the birth of Allan Ramsay (1713 – 1784), whose elegant style set him apart from other portraitists of the time. It includes key loans from UK public and private collections and new research examining the intellectual context in which Ramsay painted a number of his most important portraits.

World Museum Liverpool, Liverpool

18th October 2013 – 2nd March 2014

Magic Worlds

Magic Worlds explores ethereal realms of fairies, folklore, wizards and witches and contains more than 150 objects, including Harry Potter's broomstick, Sooty and his wand and the Cottingley fairy photographs.

Royal Academy of Arts, London

21st September – 8th December 2013

Australia

Marking the first major survey of Australian art in the UK for 50 years, this exhibition will span more than 200 years from 1800 to the present day and seeks to uncover the fascinating social and cultural evolution of a nation through its art. Two hundred works including painting, drawing, photography, watercolours and multimedia will shed light on a period of rapid and intense change.

Hatton Gallery, Newcastle

21st September – 21st December 2013

Art of the 1960s

This collection of 1960s artworks, which coincide with the building of Victor Pasmore's Apollo Pavilion in Peterlee, have been selected from the Hatton Gallery's collection. It will feature work by Victor Pasmore, Eduardo Paolozzi, Richard Hamilton and Alan Davie.

Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery, Plymouth

26th October 2013 – 15th January 2014

Hidden in Plain Sight

The term 'abstract' can mean many things – to remove, to summarise, to be difficult to understand, or to be impersonal. It can refer to art that has an object or landscape as its subject or starting point, or it can use forms that have no source from the visible world. This exhibition will focus on abstraction from the Plymouth City Museum's own collection, and will include work by Patrick Heron, Ian Davenport, and Justin Knowles.

Did you know..?

28th December is regarded as the unluckiest day of the year.



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