

4walls

the magazine for art & framing professionals



NORTH OF THE BORDER

Scotland's rising star reignites old passions

MAL'S MASTERCLASS

Back to basics with Mal's Masterclass

WOW Windows

How to create curb appeal

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Greetings from 4Walls

Welcome to Issue 14 of 4Walls magazine – your guide to the latest news, views and expert advice to help your business shine throughout the cold and dreary Winter months ahead.

In this issue, 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 some wise words for making the most of the festive season.

Our Ask the Experts panel is once again tackling some of your tricky framing troubles, and Mal Reynolds takes us back to basics with another invaluable masterclass.

We also have expert advice on how to maximise the selling potential of your window displays, and how working with your local community can have big business benefits.

We'll be looking at how one couple transformed their family business and hear about how up-and-coming Scottish artist Ron Lawson inspired a gallery in Dundee to re-launch its publishing business.

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. You never know, you could make it into a future issue.

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Cover image is - Guarding the post, Isle of Mull



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News



Keep Dancing!!

When the team at Image Frames joined the other 9.4 million viewers to tune in to the launch show of this year's Strictly Come Dancing, it wasn't the celebrities they were eager to see, but their frames!

The company, based in St Neots, were approached by Bobby's Props to make 38 gold frames in various sizes, with a very short deadline! Each of the finished frames was made using Arqadia mouldings. Nikki Strader commented: "We thought the frames were going to be used in some sort of backdrop and thought we might get a quick glimpse if we were lucky. When the show started and we saw all the frames being used as part of the celebrity interviews it was really thrilling!"

Since then, the company has also been asked to produce large gold frames for other shows including Sunday Night at The Palladium. "Watching Lionel Ritchie walk on stage carrying one of our frames was very exciting!" added Carrie.

Take a Walk on the Wild Side

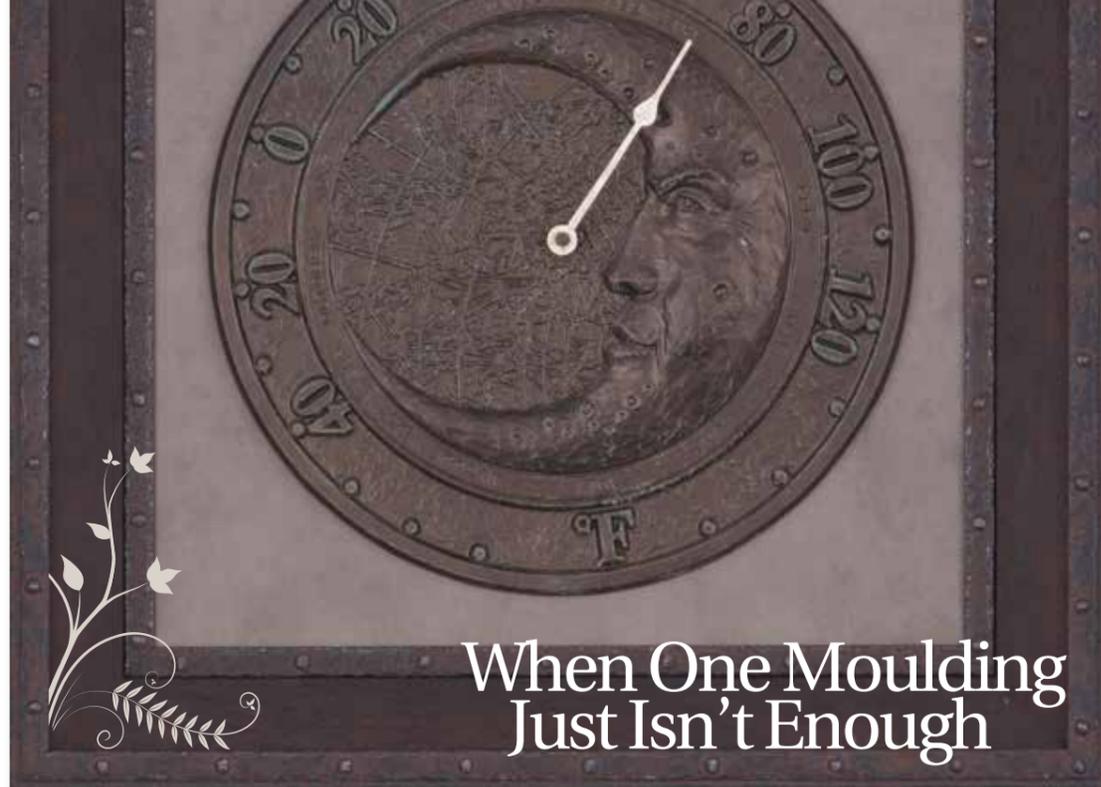
The winner of this year's Innovation in Wildlife Art Award, sponsored by Arqadia, is Emerson Mayes. His entry 'Winter Goldfinches' created using the drypoint technique with gold leaf was one of the winners at the National Exhibition of Wildlife Art Awards 2014.

The National Exhibition of Wildlife Art is an open annual exhibition for both professional and amateur artists based in the North of England. NEWA was conceived in 1993 by a group of artists interested in depicting wildlife, with conservation as one of the underlying concerns. A donation from the exhibition is made each year to wildlife causes.

Emerson Mayes has spent his entire career immersed in the changing season of the Yorkshire landscape and his work reflects his obvious passion for this vast and complex subject. His observations of both the wilderness of the natural landscape and the formal parklands of North Yorkshire capture what is essentially the true character and beauty of the Dales and its wildlife.

Emerson's works are not only accurately observed depictions of the Dales but offer a clear and personal artistic vision; evolved through the process of working in a landscape that has captivated his imagination for more than 20 years.





When One Moulding Just Isn't Enough

Framers have been stacking or layering mouldings for centuries. By combining mouldings you can enhance your frame designs by creating a wider or deeper frame, combining different ornamental patterns and mixing moulding colours. The possibilities offered by this great technique are endless and this level of customisation will make your designs stand out from your competitors.

There are many reasons to stack mouldings. There will be times when the perfect style or colour doesn't come in the perfect width for your project. You can combine two identical mouldings to create the look of a wider moulding, or mix colours and styles to achieve the ideal width and make an interesting design statement at the same time. Many shallow mouldings can be turned into shadowboxes by placing a second moulding behind them to extend the rebate depth.

Mixing styles and colours can serve different purposes. You can mix one casual and one elegant moulding to create a sense of casual elegance; or mimic more than one pattern in a piece of art to create a highly customised look your customers will not find elsewhere. Two or more colours can be combined to accent the colour scheme of whatever you are framing. If using three mouldings, you can also sandwich an accent colour between two mouldings with the same finish.

Many framers shy away from stacking because they are unsure of which mouldings to combine or how to attach mouldings together. The best way to become comfortable with combining mouldings is to play with your corner samples. You will soon see for yourself what combinations look good.

If you're looking to create a stacked combination, Arqadia's new Anvil moulding range by Larson Juhl is the perfect place to start. These classic mouldings feature five different profiles

in two exciting finishes – Aged Steel and Oiled Steel. Each one has an added back edge groove which makes them simple to lock together with other profiles.

With Chain of Custody certification from the PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) scheme, the Anvil range features two larger profiles in an Aged Steel finish, with a choice of a wider flat angled profile and an H-beam-inspired cube moulding. The two classic mouldings can also be used as a slip.

Reflecting the industrial chic home décor trend, the Oiled Steel finish allows you to incorporate accents of reclaimed metal and raw timber into your decorative framing. With a hand-forged effect, the new finish has been toned to work well with black and white photography and offers a new option to those who prefer not to use black. It is the perfect choice for mechanical drawings, steampunk art and many other types of industrial inspired artwork. A simple Oiled Steel floater frame means the industrial look can also be created for canvas framing or used as a statement-making double frame with the cube or flat moulding nestled into it.

Stacking can be fun and easy when you understand it. The more you use it, the easier it will become. Create several framed examples for your gallery displays using a variety of stacked combinations. This will give you hands-on experience designing and assembling and the results also provide you with useful selling aids that you can show to customers.

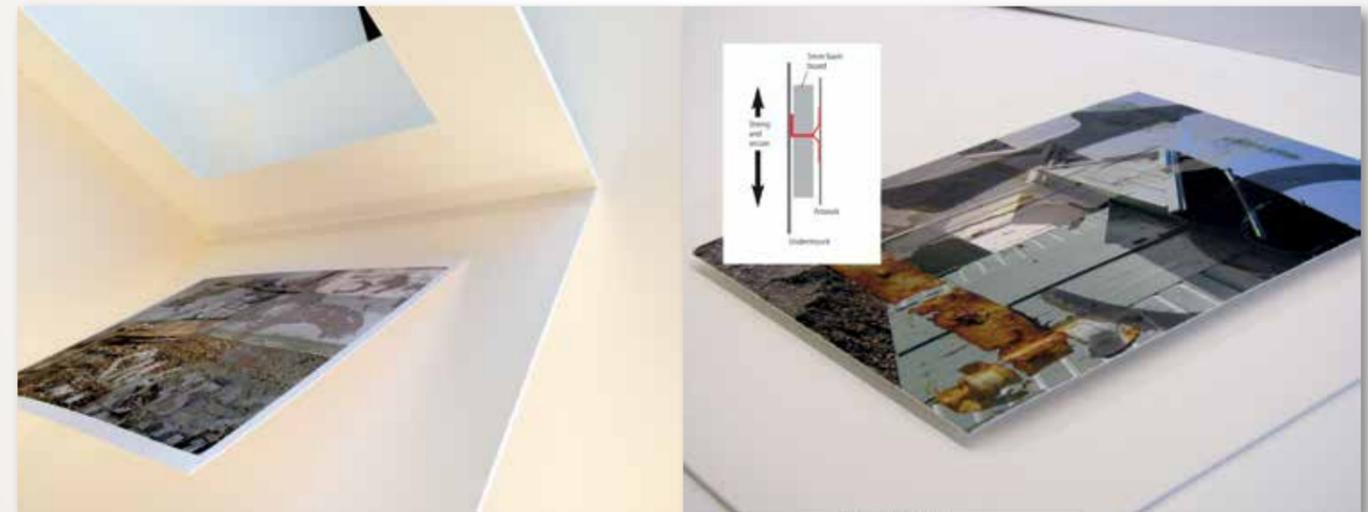


Anvil Range



Conservation Mounting and Hinging

In this masterclass we will look at Conservation mounting and hinging. Starting with the mount package and then focusing on two types of hinges; the standard 'T-Hinge' and the 'Pass Through Hinge' generally used for float mounting. All materials and techniques are at FATG Conservation and/or Museum level framing.





The mount package

FIRST, A FEW GROUND RULES:

- Mount package comprises a window mount hinged to an under mount.
- The under mount should always be hinged to the window mount along its longest side.
- Artwork should always be hinged to an under-mount, never to the verso of the window mount.
- Do NOT use pressure sensitive tapes at Conservation level framing.
- Artwork must NEVER be taped:
 - All along the top edge - artwork may cockle.
 - Across all four corners - artwork may buckle.
 - Along all four sides - artwork may buckle.



2 - Position both mounts together with a small gap between the edges and centrally apply the linen tape. The small gap helps when folding the mount.



3 - Burnish the linen tape to ensure good adhesion.



4 - Fold the two mounts together to form the Mount Packaging.

Note: If joining differing thickness window and under mounts it is important that the surfaces are level when taping together.

The mount package comprises a window mount and under mount that have been hinged together along the long side with either linen tape or white cotton gummed paper tape. For portrait images, hinge along the left-hand edge and for landscape images, along the top edge.

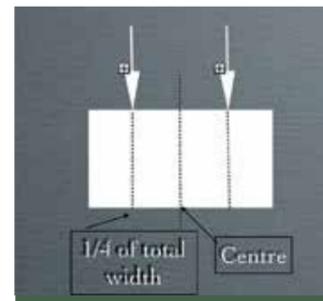
1 - Cut the window mount, with appropriate aperture, and the under mount to size along with the relevant length of linen tape.

Hinging - general advice

1 - When considering hinging, reversibility is key and the framer must be confident that the artwork is properly supported.

2 - The tape or paper used should be weaker than the artwork, so that the hinge would tear before the artwork.

3 - The application of tape and moisture to the artwork may create local stress; this is why you should apply the minimum amount of tape/moisture to the back of the artwork. A 5mm overlap is normally considered sufficient, but this depends upon the size and weight of the image.

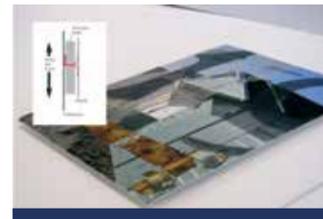


4 - The quantity and location of hinges depends upon the weight of the artwork.



5 - The strength of a hinge depends on whether it is in 'shear' or 'peel'; those in shear are considerably stronger than in peel. A pendant or 'T-Hinge' hinge is in shear and will tear under stress, while a folded hinge is in peel which means that the adhesive will become unattached if the hinge is under stress.

The pass through hinge:



The 'pass-through' hinge provides a strong support and is an excellent method of both float and shadow float mounting.



Lengths of tape or paper are passed through the required number of slits cut into the supporting board. Once the hinge has been passed through the board it is adjusted and secured with a cross piece over each of the tabs on the support board.

The tabs on the front of the support board are then opened and attached to the back of the artwork.

This hinge can be modified to provide extra strength. This is achieved by taking a length of tape or paper, folding it in to and passing the folded part of the hinge through the support board and secure it as before. Then open loose ends and attach them to the rear of the artwork.



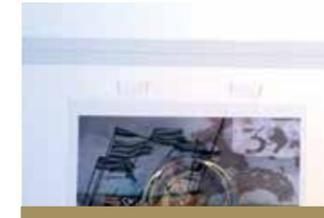
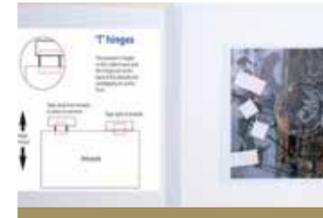
'Pass-through' hinges can be used when 'shadow' float mounting artwork. This means that the artwork is distanced from the undermount with a spacer, such as a piece of foam-board, so that the artwork appears to float slightly above the undermount. In this case, the slits would be cut into the foam board, rather than a thinner undermount or support board. The resulting spacer and artwork is then glued to the undermount using EvaCon-R™.

The 'T-hinge'

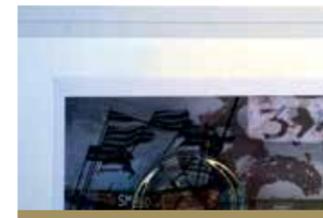
The 'T-hinge' is the most common option. It is used on the majority of standard mounts and can support artwork of an irregular shape as well as circles and ovals.

The hinge, which is applied to the top of the artwork, comprises of two strips of tape; one small tab adhered vertically to the back of the artwork and a second, placed horizontally across the aforementioned tab securing the artwork to the undermount. Spacing/location and number of hinges will depend on the weight of the artwork; however hinges should not be placed at corners, as sideways stress may cause cockling.

As both parts of the 'T-hinge' are in shear this creates a strong hinge. When hinging irregular shapes, the cross strips should be aligned parallel to the horizontal axis and as close to the artwork as practical.



3 - Lift the window mount and apply moistened horizontal tabs, thereby attaching artwork to the undermount, leaving a small gap between the tabs and the artwork for expansion.



1 - Cut the required number of tabs to size. Slightly moisten the vertical tabs and fix into position on the back of the artwork by approx 5mm.



Completed T-hinge and mount.



2 - Position artwork within the mount package and weight.

Procedure for shadow float mount:



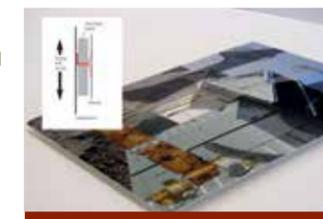
1 - Assemble the materials including the material to be used as a spacer. Spacer to be cut to size slightly smaller than the artwork.



2 - Mark out and cut the required number of slits in the spacer.



3 - Make the hinges by cutting and folding into two 60mm pieces of Cotton gummed tape. Burnish with artist's bone to ensure the crease is sharp.



4 - Insert the creased hinges into the slits in the spacer and fold over leaving approx 5mm on the side to be attached to the artwork.



5 - Fold over the back of the hinge and tape for security.



6 - Slightly moisten the front tabs and place the artwork on the spacer as required. Place a weight on the artwork and allow time for the tabs to dry.



7 - Apply EvaCon-R™ to the back of the foam-board, place on the back mount, weight and allow to dry.

Points to Note:

1. If the artwork is on light weight paper the tape hinges may well be seen and leave an indent. In this case use Japanese papers and starch paste for the hinges.
2. If the artwork has been rolled and is not completely flat then no matter how hard you try the edges of the artwork will not lie flat.
3. These points should be highlighted to the customer before work commences.

NB: Artwork by kind permission Caroline Woodward
www.sandpiperart.co.uk

Mal Reynolds
www.harlequin-frames.co.uk

Materials used:

Acid-free Gummed Paper Tape 999000026
Acid-free Gummed Linen Tape 999000027
Cotton Rag Gummed Paper Tape 999000031
Bone Folder SUBBFL0006
EvaCon-R SUEVAR0001

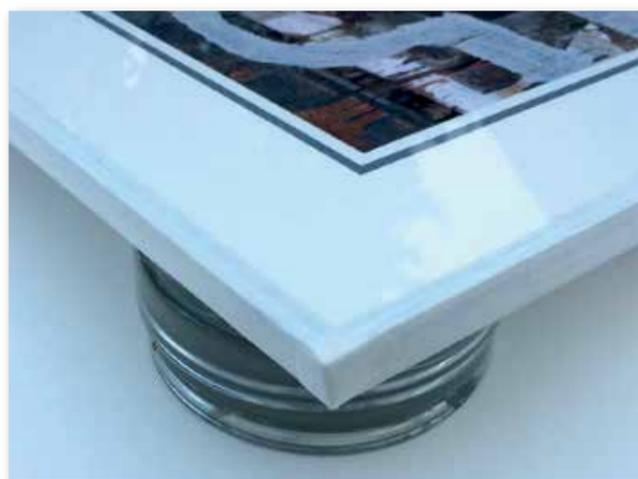


Mal's next Masterclass will demonstrate how to make the most of Mountslips. From cutting to joining, giving a step-by-step guide.

Did you know..?

The hinge is an incredibly simple yet important piece of technology. The first traces of the hinge date back to as early as 1600BC. Discoveries in Hattusa, an ancient eastern capital, showed early forms of hinges being used to make massive objects mobile.

Your questions answered Ask the Experts



Q A customer recently brought several prints into the Gallery that had a large number of what appears to be small insects inside. Is there anything that can be done to prevent these insects getting into the frame?

A The small insects that you refer to are known as 'thunderflies' in Lincolnshire and are a particular nuisance during the summer when swarms of them arrive around the time of wheat and barley harvesting. The flies get everywhere and actually gain access to frames through the front, between the glazing and the edge of the moulding. I have actually seen them in computer screens such is their determination.

Once inside the frame they need to be removed as soon as possible as when they start to decay the residue, will amongst other issues, stain the mountboard which will then require replacing.

The method I use in an attempt to reduce infestation is to seal or sandwich the glazing, windowmount, artwork and undermount. This is done by using either cotton museum tape or a pressure-sensitive tape to wrap around the edge of the glazing such that it cannot be seen beyond the sight edge of the moulding when the package is placed in the frame. This tape then extends around the edge of the mount package and onto the back of the undermount. Care should be taken around the corners to complete a full seal; to achieve this you might use either PVA or EvaCon-R™ to glue the taped corners.

This method of sealing works most of the time but those pesky insects can find the slightest gap in order to gain access to the frame.



Mal Reynolds
Harlequin Framing

Lira Leads The Way With Earth-Friendly Manufacturing

Sustainability is a vital issue in all industries and the ability to prove that timber products have been derived from a well-managed source is now an increasingly key factor in the specification of products such as mouldings.

At Lira, Larson Juhl's manufacturing facility in the Czech Republic, environmental consciousness is an important priority. Lumber management is one area where Lira has a tremendous advantage in being earth-friendly. Located near an old-growth forest the facility is able to carefully control what is harvested. Lira not only responsibly harvests wood for manufacturing within the facility, offering the only source of PEFC certified lumber in the Czech Republic; but is also able to provide lumber for other international Larson Juhl locations.

Recycling materials where possible and sorting waste, is an important part of the manufacturing process and is really where the facility at Lira is raising the bar in terms of earth-friendly manufacturing. In 1997, the team developed a new technical process which allows them to recycle clean sawdust by turning it into environmentally friendly briquettes. These briquettes are an extremely high quality and clean source of fuel which are used in the heating of the facility and also sold to third parties as an additional income source for the business.

Jan Huda, Sales Director at Lira, explains how they offer a full 360° approach when it comes to environmental responsibility. "Many of our procedures and processes at the facility have been in place for years, setting a great example in the manufacturing world by proactively caring for our environment.

"Sustainability is a key focus at every step and we take an all-encompassing approach. Wood is harvested from our on-site, responsibly managed forest then taken to our own saw-mill where the lumber is finger-jointed; which makes more efficient use of a tree and produces less waste. The lumber is then used in the production of our mouldings and the waste is recycled into the briquettes.

For other materials that are not appropriate for recycling, we work with specialised companies to ensure that the material is disposed of properly and receives all appropriate certifications.

"Many of the manufacturing processes at Lira use water-based products that are better for air quality, in regards to emissions created during finishing. We have also invested in state-of-the-art equipment (oxidizer) which ecologically liquidates nitro emissions generated during production. Very few manufacturers in our industry have this type of equipment, and we believe that we are making an important statement regarding responsibility, as well as showing our desire to be a good neighbour within our community."



Prague range

Scotland's Rising Star Reignites Old Passions



The Eduardo Alessandro Gallery in Dundee is one of the largest galleries on the east coast of Scotland, with a history that spans over 35 years. In its heyday it was also one of Scotland's biggest independent art publishing houses producing everything from posters to highly sought-after, limited edition fine art prints. 15 years ago, as the publishing landscape began to change, managing partner Lee Paladini and his brother Sandro, decided to move away from publishing and focus on the retail side of the business. That was until a remarkable new local artist called Ron Lawson paid them a visit.

Born in 1960, Ron spent his early years on a farm in Mid-Lothian, Scotland before a career took him to the art studio of publishers DC Thomson in Dundee where he progressively developed the dynamic and highly individual palette and technique that is central to his work today. In 2010, after 35 years, Ron left his career to concentrate his time fully on painting.

"Ron first approached us in 2011; he'd left DC Thomson and spent the last year focusing on refining and perfecting his work. It was easy to see right from the beginning that he was an artist of unique style and outstanding technique," explains Lee. "We began exhibiting his work in the gallery and the response was amazing. Customers showed an instant affinity to his paintings."

As a keen cyclist, Ron has spent a great deal of time exploring the Western Isles where he became deeply inspired by the people, lifestyles and landscapes of these sparsely populated dramatic outposts. "This influence can clearly be seen in his artwork which captures the wild remoteness and majesty of the Outer Hebrides and Scottish Highlands," adds Lee. "His paintings evoke a dramatic sense of moodiness and isolation. Using his signature style of a dark grey sky he takes a traditional subject matter and gives it a modern twist."



Drying Day, North Uist



Struan Cottage, North Uist

Ron's unique and instantly recognisable style has met with an extraordinary response throughout the UK and abroad. His first major solo exhibition in Dundee nearly sold out by the end of the first day and he now regularly enjoys sell-out shows in Scotland, London and New York. In a relatively short time he has become widely regarded as Scotland's most original and distinctive contemporary landscape painter.

His landscapes, although distinctively Scottish, transcend borders; resulting in his remarkable ascendancy towards a deserved reputation as the rising star of Scottish landscape painting. It was this phenomenal success that prompted Lee and Sandro to once again delve into the world of art publishing.

"Although we had moved away from art publishing towards the end of the 90s, we began to think that, given his universal appeal, Ron's work would be the perfect platform to resurrect that side of the business" explains Lee. "We hadn't really published any artist's work in nearly 15 years, focussing instead on building the gallery; but we were confident that Ron's dynamic and highly individual style would appeal to a wider audience. Diversifying the business again after so long was a bit of a gamble but it was definitely the right route to take. The fine art prints have proved as popular as Ron's original pieces, with limited editions of 195 copies selling out in less than six months."

"The response to Ron's work has been extraordinary with internet sales coming from as far afield as Australia and Hong Kong. We have not seen such an enthusiastic and widespread reaction to an artist's work since the heyday of McIntosh Patrick."

Since re-launching its art publishing arm, the gallery now works with a select number of up-and-coming artists. "Our partnership with Ron has been extremely successful but we've no desire to go back to what we were doing 20 years ago. Back then we were publishing in vast quantities but the market has changed, our strategy now is to focus on a smaller number of high quality products. We want to position ourselves as a niche, bespoke publisher rather than mass market."

"The gallery remains the main focus of the business. After 35 years it has grown into one of the largest and most well-known galleries this side of Scotland and during that time we have been privileged enough to have worked with some of the industry's biggest names. However, the publishing side is doing very well and has helped us continue to grow and build the business in what remains an uncertain economy."

www.eastudios.com

Did you know..?

The aquatints of Francisco Goya (1746-1828) were the first important prints to be published initially in limited editions, which however were not signed or numbered.



Green Boat, Barra

Being a Good Neighbour can Benefit Your Business

Partnering with a local non-profit organisation, charity or community group that is active in your community can add value to your business in ways you never imagined.

You spend hours trying to decide where your marketing budget will most benefit your business. But one form of marketing that can often be overlooked for its effectiveness is corporate social responsibility (CSR) or community involvement. It's effective because it allows your company to give something back to the community that supports your business and, when done correctly, it can drastically enhance your company image.

Most large organisations have programs for social responsibility and community involvement, and it is a great idea for small businesses too.

Here are some reasons you should support a charity or non-profit endeavour in your community:

1. Community support and good will. Being part of a community is vital for a small business. In the days of the mega stores and the internet, it can be difficult to sustain a small business. One way to ensure that your business thrives in your community is to help build a thriving community.

2. Marketing opportunities. When you donate money, time, products or services, charity and non-profit groups usually have some sort of recognition program. Having your business name included is good promotion. People are more apt to support businesses they feel are part of their world. Ask the group or organisation you are supporting to promote your involvement to their members, email subscribers and website visitors. They should be happy to do this because the stronger your company becomes, the more you can support their cause. Promote the results of your efforts. Let customers and the public know how you serve the not-for-profit and exactly how your involvement has helped that organisation. Customers want to know that the businesses they support have a positive impact on the local community.

3. The opportunity to support causes you believe in. It is great if you can tie your business purpose to

a particular charity, it doesn't have to be dedicated to it, but if there is some type of link it makes your association much more natural. If there's not something with an obvious link, pick a charity or community group that you are passionate about and support them.

4. Contributions don't have to drain your bank account. Since a small business is limited by funds, the best way to become an asset is to offer time and service. Contact the group you would like to help and see how you can work together in a way which is mutually beneficial. Don't limit yourself to once-a-year involvement. To be fully co-branded, you need to market your involvement throughout the year in newsletters, gallery signage and on your website.

5. The opportunity to be involved. Getting involved in your local community is a great business strategy for many reasons. As you get to know others and work with others for a cause that you believe in, you will have fun and, you'll become a part of the group. You will be involved and that can help you with marketing your business in many ways—you will know the needs of the community and be able to find ways to meet them. It's hard to buy that kind of market research anywhere, but almost impossible for small businesses.

All in all, supporting a charity or non-profit group can help your business grow and the rewards are fantastic when done correctly; but most of all, it can be a great way to give back to your community and help support causes that need your help.



Case Study: Back To School

For Jan Rixon, owner of T.G Art Gallery in Wokingham, working with a local primary school has not only helped raise awareness of her business in the community but has also directly increased sales.

"I was approached by Wescott Primary School to see if I would help with an art project its Year 1 pupils were doing. It was the first time I had done anything like this and, after sorting out the logistics, we arranged for small groups of children to visit the gallery. They had the opportunity to look at the art on display and have a go at creating stories around the artwork. I showed them how we frame a variety of different objects, including a jigsaw from the 1920s. They were able to get hands-on with different materials and I gave them each a little goody bag to take home with pencils etc.

"The day was a wonderful success and the children and staff really enjoyed themselves. Shortly after the visit I was also sponsoring the Wokingham Open Air Cinema and the organiser said I could run an advertisement before the showing of the films. I didn't want to do anything boring so I asked the school if the children could get involved and they were thrilled. We produced a really fun video which showed the children exploring the gallery and when the advert ran on the night, everyone commented on how great it was.

"Following on from that first visit I decided to adopt the school as my chosen charity to support throughout the year. Since then I've gone into the school to give a talk to all of the pupils about what a framer does and we're organizing more visits to the gallery.

"As well as being extremely enjoyable the association with the school has definitely had a positive effect on the business. I regularly get children bringing their parents into the store to have a look; as well as teachers from the school. I bought the business seven years ago, although the gallery has been here for 27 years; but it's amazing how many people still don't realise what we do. Working with the school has helped increase that awareness and attract people who perhaps wouldn't normally have visited us. When the children bring their parents many of them make some sort of purchase which are sales we wouldn't have had before."

www.tgartgallery.co.uk

Did you know..?

Captain Thomas Coram, appalled by the number of abandoned children living on the streets of London, set up the Foundling Hospital in 1741. This was the first such charity in the world and served as the precedent for incorporated associational charities everywhere.

Give Your Windows the Wow Factor

One of the most effective ways to promote your business is right there in front of your eyes every day – your display windows. Major retailers have long realised their selling potential and spend huge budgets creating impressive displays designed to entice customers into the store. But no matter how big or small your store, window displays done well can be a powerful marketing tool. But for them to be successful, they must generate a response. And that response is for potential customers to open your door, come in and buy something!



Great window displays should attract positive attention to your store. When you change your displays regularly, you can show passers-by the diversity of your product line in a short period of time. A variety of displays also helps familiarise people with your business. Use displays to show people what you can do for them, not just what you want to sell.

Window displays often have more impact and meaning when each one revolves around a theme. Remember, themes do not mean gimmicks. Use the various topics to connect with your customer's interests. At Swan Artworks in Midsomer Norton, owners Carrie and Tony Osborne regularly create eye-catching displays around key seasonal events. "We have a traditional bow-fronted shop with two large windows", explains Carrie. "We use one for general retail and the other always has some sort of themed display tied in with the season, key calendar dates or local events. This Summer we linked with the town's WWI Centenary celebrations to create an 'In the Trenches' display using props and memorabilia. The reaction from customers was amazing. We had so many people who came into the store just to make a comment about the display and, of course once they were in, they started to browse and ask questions and many went on to buy something. It really encouraged people to stop and think; and take an interest. We actually won first prize in the town competition for local businesses which was wonderful.

"We've done lots of great displays over the years. Last Christmas we had an Aladdin theme to tie in with the town's pantomime and every year we have a military window for

Remembrance Day. As well as framed art we also display examples of medal set work and it always generates an increase in these types of framing jobs as people see what a beautiful piece you can create."

When you create displays, your goal should always be to appeal to your target customers. However, it may be even more important to use displays to bring in new people. This will help replenish and build your customer base, offsetting rising business costs and replacing customers who have moved away or just stopped purchasing custom framing.

Carrie adds: "The WWI display created so much interest from people who would never normally have walked through our door. We've been here for five years and it's surprising how many people still don't know what we do. The displays really help to pull in new customers."

Keep in mind that successful window displays rarely just happen. Most require strategic planning as well as time and effort. Here are some general tips for creating successful window displays.

Did you know..?

Last year, Harrods Christmas window displays took 50 people three weeks to create. They featured 60 trees, hundreds of thousands of lights and a £80,000 Swarovski-covered dress.

Create a schedule – organise your themes on a calendar, planning as far out as you can. Professional window display artists often have their themes planned a year in advance. Start with the date you want to install the display and work backwards from there, allowing time for each task involved such as choosing artwork, ordering framing materials etc.

Keep it simple – you generally have only a few seconds to attract people's attention as they pass by. Simple, uncluttered displays usually have stronger focal points and tend to attract attention faster.

Use larger pieces – the benefit of having fewer things in your displays means the things you do show can be larger. Scale is important when you are trying to capture attention from people across the street.

Make it light or colourful – window-tinting or reflections can often make stores look like black holes. Use framed art that is light or bright in colour to contrast with the darkness.

Stay close to the glass – the further the display is from the window, the more it is obscured by reflections on the glass.

Backdrops – people will be able to focus on your displays more easily when you define them with a backdrop. This can be a solid wall, a room divider screen or fabric panels. These backdrop walls do not have to cover the entire length of the window, it is nice to leave some of your store's interior visible for passersby too.

Let there be light – consider adding tack lighting directly over the window as it will allow you to adjust the direction of light each time you change displays. Pay attention to the lighting so it doesn't create a glare on the glass of your framed art.

Choose components carefully – your displays will have a lot more meaning when everything in them is selected for a reason. Take time to think through what you want to promote and what will help build sales.

Communicate your message – just because you know what your theme is, don't count on your customers to know what your point is. Use signs to make it clear. For example, if the theme is Mother's Day, use a call to action message letting people know they can buy Mum a gift at your store.

Once you have your window settings in place, they should be easy to manage. If you keep them simple, you will be more likely to follow through with each future display and see greater rewards. Don't measure the success of each display on how much you sell from the display itself. Pay attention to how many people the display brought into the store and whether it leads to new custom-framing orders or the sale of anything else. Focus on what works and what doesn't. Keep refining your ideas until you can create one success after another.

www.swanartworks.com

The Future's Bright

In an uncertain economy, making significant investments to completely overhaul your business could be described as risky to say the least. But for Victoria Ede and her husband Leon, it was a leap of faith that has resulted in huge rewards.

The couple took over the running of Art Warehouse in Bristol when Victoria's parents retired from the business in 2012 after 20 years at the helm.

"The business was doing OK, but it had so much more potential and was in desperate need of a facelift. We thought about different ways in which we could give it a bit of a makeover on a budget but in the end we decided to go for it and went all out with a complete overhaul," explains Victoria.

"We couldn't afford to close the store while we completed the works so my parents came out of retirement to help with the design and project management, leaving us with time to oversee the day-to-day running of the business.

"We thought carefully about what we wanted to achieve, where the business was going and what offered us the greatest opportunity for expansion. Previously, we were primarily a gallery with a limited framing offering and a small cafe area. We decided that the framing service together with an enhanced hospitality offering were key to growing the business.

"It sounds a strange thing to say for a retail business but one of the biggest changes was to make the whole store much more customer-focused. We changed the layout by moving the customer counter to the front of the store, making us more accessible to customers; while new lighting and decoration gave the gallery a brighter, more welcoming atmosphere.

"We doubled the amount of mouldings we stock and built a new 3 metre wall of chevrons so that customers could see immediately what we had to offer.

The support we got from Arqadia in helping to advise on product ranges and styles was fantastic. We don't have a huge amount of storage space so the convenience of being able to order by length meant that we could still expand our mouldings offering without worrying about holding lots of stock.

"We really upgraded our offering with lots of new, higher-end moulding ranges. It was a bit of a gamble, we didn't want to price ourselves out of the market but now that the store looks so much better we've found people expect to pay more for the finished product. As well as increasing our profit margin, the higher quality products are attracting new customers we wouldn't have seen before. We also invested in new equipment so that we could undertake more complex framing jobs and increased our range of accessories and glass.

"The gallery had always been the main focus of the store and we extended our range further, bringing in new up-and-coming local artists. Since making the improvements it's much easier to attract high quality artists to exhibit and we now run both a local and international artist of the month.

"The business is situated in the heart of Bristol's docks – an area which has undergone enormous changes over the last twenty years and is now a thriving tourist spot. Its premium location offered the perfect opportunity to expand the other side of the business. "We'd always had a small cafe area, mainly serving tea, coffee and cakes, but with the location and regeneration of the area there was a massive potential to expand on what we had to offer," explains Victoria. "We fitted a fully functional kitchen, obtained a drinks license and increased our opening hours. We now offer a varied menu covering everything from brunch

to supper. The cafe attracts a completely different set of customers who although not initially interested in art, soon start to look around once inside and are usually pleasantly surprised by what they see."

"The renovation of the gallery took just over two months with the cafe opening a few months later. "Staying open whilst the work was done was definitely a challenge but having my parents involved in the project was a huge help, we couldn't have done it without them. It had been their business for over 20 years so it was only right that they should be part of its renaissance. It wasn't all plain sailing of course, we each had our own ideas and getting everyone to agree was sometimes difficult, but we're all delighted with the results and what we have achieved together.

"The response from customers has been amazing, everyone loves our new look. We really didn't expect to see such significant growth in such a short period of time. It has completely exceeded our expectations. My advice to anyone thinking about taking on a project like this is just do it! It seems like a big mountain to climb at first but if you don't make a start it will never get done."

www.artwarehouse.co.uk



Before



Counter and Gallery after



Cafe after overhaul



Cafe/Gallery after overhaul

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

We want to take this opportunity to wish all our customers a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Over the Christmas period, our offices will be closed from Wednesday 24th December 2014 until Monday 5th January 2015.

For a pre-Christmas delivery we'd be looking at the following dates for the last collections: For Channel Islands & Isle of Man – Thursday 18th December
Ireland – Friday 19th December

For UK mainland orders (including chop service orders) placed before 4pm on Monday 22nd December, we will aim to deliver on Tuesday 23rd December. Only overnight orders placed by Tuesday lunchtime 23rd will be guaranteed delivery Wednesday 24th.

Last order dates for delivery before Christmas to: Channel Islands is Friday 19th December.

Isle of Wight, Highlands, Grampians and Scottish Isles is Friday 19th December. Normal service will resume on Monday 5th January 2015.

Thank you for your continued support during 2014 and we look forward to working together in 2015.

A very Merry Christmas from the whole team at Arqadia!

NB: All dates correct at time of going to press but could be subject to change.

The Holidays are coming

So the clocks have gone back, the weather man is forecasting snow and the shops have been playing Christmas songs for what seems like months. Love it or hate it, the festive season will soon be upon us, business will be done and money will be spent, so now is the time to get prepared to ensure your business cashes-in on Christmas.

Perfect presents

Consumers are spoilt for choice at Christmas, but a bit of creativity can work wonders to tempt them with unusual present ideas. Customers are looking for an interesting and special gift and framers are here and ready to provide just such a thing. A display that demonstrates how you can frame family photos and keepsakes will be sure to appeal as gifts with a personal touch. Or group themed products, such as art materials together and wrap as attractive gift ideas. Experiment with attaching gift labels to items to endorse their present potential.

Often people prefer giving vouchers to ensure the recipient gets something they really want. Gift vouchers are easy and cheap to create and money-off purchase vouchers are also a good way to encourage repeat business.

The purpose is to make people think of art and framing as a gift – we want to get their attention before they spend their money on something silly like fluffy slippers and ties!

Work those windows

Festive shop windows dominate the high street as Christmas approaches. Retailers spend huge amounts of money creating extravagant displays designed to entice people inside. Adopting a similar tactic (although on a much smaller budget) should pay dividends with both passing traffic and regular customers. It's worth

investing time and effort here as this is your main selling tool for attracting customers. It's vital to impress, stand out from the crowd and communicate clearly what you offer. See our article on page 14 for top tips on creating eye-catching window displays.

Far from the madding crowd

Where art businesses can score over crowded shops and department stores is in providing a haven from high street hysteria. Subtle and sophisticated decorations and festive music will create a welcoming retreat for customers to linger. Think about what will appeal to your clientele and suit your existing business atmosphere – minimalist and modern or more traditional.

Remember, products must be attractive and accessible so customers are inclined to browse and purchase. Eye-level is buy-level, so arrange your Christmas specials at this height.

Little added touches mean a lot at this time of year, so consider including a free gift-wrapping service or offer shoppers a complimentary mulled wine and mince pie while they browse. Don't be a Scrooge, allow your staff to get into the festive spirit – customers will notice the positive atmosphere and respond accordingly.

Christmas is the busiest shopping period so make sure you're prepared to maximise your selling potential and reap the rewards. Oh and one more thing... Merry Christmas!

Dates for your diary

The V&A

Constable: The Making of a Master

20th September 2014 to 11th January 2015

The V&A presents a fresh interpretation of Britain's best-loved landscape painter, with this major exhibition revealing the method behind Constable's most famous paintings as they are reunited with his oil sketches. Among the 150 sketches, drawings, watercolours and engravings on display, there are many of the artist's most iconic works, including The Hay Wain, The Cornfield and Salisbury Cathedral from the Meadows; showcasing his revolutionary approach to capturing light and atmosphere.

Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art-MIMA

Derek Eland: Diary Rooms

November 11th - February 26th 2015

This exhibition recreates the war artist's installation piece of cards filled with the thoughts from current soldiers serving in Afghanistan.

FATG Awards weekend

Old Swan Hotel, Harrogate

Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th May

BRITISH MUSEUM conservator Joanna Kosek will be running a seminar and a workshop at the Art & Framing Convention. Joanna trained as a paper conservator, specialising in art on paper at Camberwell College of Art, London, after completing higher education at Maria Curie University of Lublin, Poland where she read English. She started her career in the British Museum in 1989 in the specialist area of conservation of Western prints, drawings and watercolours. In 1994 she worked in the Victoria Memorial Hall, Kolkata, India as part of the conservation team of the Calcutta Tercentenary Trust. Areas of interest in which she has published and lectured are conservation history, pastel and oil on paper techniques, washing techniques for paper, mounting and housing and the effect of macro- and micro-environments on paper.

Tate St Ives

The Modern Lens: International Photography and the Tate collection

14th October 2014 – 10th May 2015

For the first time, pioneering artists from across America, Europe and Japan will be shown together in the largest display of photographic works to be exhibited at the gallery. This exhibition will showcase pieces from the 1920s to 60's, and will uncover the sense of curiosity and experimentation in photography as artists began to use the medium in new ways.

Did you know..?

In 1908 the Smythson Company created the first featherweight diary enabling diaries to be carried about.

Points of View

Here at 4Walls, we are always keen to make sure we keep delivering the content you want to read. In the last issue we ran a readers survey to get your feedback into the kind of articles you are most interested in. We had a tremendous response and all of the completed surveys were entered into a prize draw to win £250 of Arqadia products. The lucky winner was Rachel Belle from Andover Framing in Hampshire.

Thank you to everyone who took part in the survey, the results will help us to continue to ensure that the magazine gives you not only an entertaining read and interesting insight into the world of art and framing, but also a helpful and informative guide to help your framing business succeed.

The survey was such a success we'd like to pick your brains again. We know that many of you are regular visitors to www.arqadia.co.uk. As we make plans to refresh the website in readiness for 2015, we would greatly appreciate your feedback around some key areas.

- Do you access the website from a desktop computer, laptop, tablet or mobile?
- What is the first thing you want to see when you are on the website?
- What are the key pieces of content you want to see?
- Is the navigation clear?
- How important is buying online?
- Is framers' haven useful?
- Is the pr toolkit useful?
- Having visited the site, what would prompt you to visit our facebook and twitter channels?
- What general comments could you give us?

if you would like to help with this research, please email your thoughts to me at pauline.hutchinson@arqadia.co.uk before December 1st 2014. Alternatively, we would be delighted to talk to you in person. If you would be willing to take part in a 15 minute interview, perhaps you could drop me an email.

Very many thanks and we look forward to hearing from you.



The AUTUMN COLLECTION

ARQADIA
A Larson-Juhl company

From mouldings to mountboard, frames to glass (and everything in-between). Whatever you're looking for, Arqadia gives you plenty of options.

Visit arqadia.co.uk to view our range.

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