

NEW HOW TO VIDEOS

Thanks to Jon Price, GCF (AFF) of Handmade Picture Framing in Rade, Larson-Juhl has six new 'how to' videos. In this article, Jon explains his inspiration and approach. The videos can be viewed at www.larsonjuhl.co.uk/#walls/haven.

With all six of the Larson-Juhl videos the idea was to demonstrate straight forward design orientated techniques that framers could use on a daily basis, but in many cases don't. I firmly believe that when

you do something that's a bit different you make your work stand out and, when that's done well, it creates demand. I also think framing should be cool, funky, sexy and stylish, in other words very design orientated. Because the truth is that, no matter the importance of conservation, design and looks sell. Think selling anti-reflective glass verses conservation glass.

I constantly want to improve my framing knowledge. I feel very lucky to have a number of framing 'mentors' who are absolutely at the top of their game and yet

have always made the time to answer my many questions. Much of that support has come through the Fine Art Trade Guild and has made membership worth every penny. To progress, to keep things interesting and challenging you need to continually develop your skills. It would make me very happy to think that I've helped even just a few framers develop theirs.

In terms of aesthetics, the frame designs in the six Larson-Juhl videos speak for themselves. The techniques may be simple but the end results look great.



◀ Framing a canvas

When we decided to work together, Larson-Juhl started the ball rolling by suggesting some ideas for the themes of our six videos. Framing a canvas using an L-shaped moulding was one of the suggestions but I felt that was a bit straightforward and run of the mill. Don't get me wrong, on the right piece, L-shapes look fantastic. They're modern and stylish, simple, but a sophisticated step away from traditional canvas framing, yet I felt we needed something more inspirational.

I was once advised to 'mess around with new mouldings to see how they fit and stack together with other mouldings'. So, when I decided the L-shape needed something extra, that's what I did. The canvas I was framing for this video was really vibrant and modern. I didn't want to take away from it by using a moulding of a matching strong colour. Besides, that option could easily have ended up looking tacky.

The simplicity of the smooth white L-shape moulding is a flattering contrast to the bright and busy canvas image, and its modern look reflects the feel of the piece. I tend to think that a canvas needs a wide moulding or it risks lacking presence. Adding a wider, flatter frame of the same colour and finish seemed like an obvious answer and when I tried the two together I knew it worked really well. The lovely little detail of the step between the two mouldings was an added bonus which helps to draw the viewer's eye into the image.



◀ Stacking Mouldings (Coastal Woods)

Larson-Juhl were keen that we use their Coastal Woods range for one of the six new videos. As I've confessed in my recent [4walls article \(Issue 31\)](#), I hadn't really taken much notice of the coastal woods range up until this point. Well 'my bad' as the saying goes. The Coastal Woods range turned out to be innovative, clever, very adaptable and most importantly the end result looked really, really good.

Having denied all previous knowledge of the Coastal Woods range, I ought at this point to try and save some face by explaining that, although using Coastal Woods wasn't my choice, I did choose the three frame component colours, profiles and their combination. The range has a total of 104

different components to choose from, so I did do some design work after all!

The canvas chosen for the 'stacking mouldings' video is a modern winter scene. The predominant colours being shades of white, grey and black. I choose to frame with the black profiles because it is more dramatic but doesn't detract from the image. I like the fact that the woody grain of the mouldings works well with both the trees in the scene and the texture of the canvas. There's something very satisfying about matching textures as well as colours. The combination of S-shaped off-set moulding, spacer and standard profile moulding creates a wide, chunky frame with masses of dynamics but it doesn't overwhelm the image. The overall effect is modern and stylish. There's so much going on with this frame that it should seem complicated and distract from the image, and yet it's wonderfully simple.



◀ Shadow mounting

This is another really simple technique. Essentially, it's just placing a layer of recessed foam board between two window mounts. It's very effective though and when it's done well it creates a window effect that draws the viewer's eye to the artwork.

What pleases me about the mount design in this particular video is the placement of the shadow mount. Having the shadow space (I just made that term up, by the way) beneath the brown second mount makes the shadow effect stronger. The 10mm of off white window mount between the brown and the image meant I could use a stronger brown than I might have otherwise. Had the brown been right next to the image it might have been too much of a distraction and drawn the eye away from the picture. Both colours of the mount, but particularly the brown, match and emphasise the cottage which is the central element of the image and the point the viewer's eye should be drawn to. Add a matching brown frame and I'm a happy man - it doesn't take much!



▲ Mount board cover tape

I had only been framing for a few months when I went to the Spring Fair for the first time. I was very aware that being based in rural North Cornwall meant I was practically a framing hermit. A lack of knowledge and skill sharing opportunities is a problem for many rural framers. Especially those that are new to the industry. So, I wanted to go and find out what the world of framing was all about. I came away from the event with a multitude of ideas and contacts, and I have to say what a shame it is that the Spring Fair is not what it once was.

One simple concept that really impressed were the deep bevelled mounts I saw used with artist Stephen Doig's Icon Images on the Chantry Fine Art stand. I spent ages trying to work out how such deep bevels could be achieved. Were they multiple sheets of mount board stacked on top of each other? If so, they couldn't have been cut at the same time and would have to be cut separately with minute increases in window size for each layer. It took me a while to discover that the answer was, of course, mount board cover tape. I say 'of course' like it's obvious and it is obvious, once you know. Obvious or not, I don't see mount board cover tape being used that much. Which is a shame when it looks so good.

◀ Constructing a mount package

I said at the start of this article that the concept of the six Larson-Juhl videos was to 'demonstrate straight forward design orientated techniques'. Constructing a mount package is the exception. For me this video is about demonstrating what should be one of the most fundamental framing skills; mounting paper based artwork. I can't believe how few framers, artists and photographers know how to mount artwork on paper properly, so that it is correctly supported and far less likely to cockle or buckle.

Ironically, my mission to educate the framing masses was slightly misinterpreted by Larson-Juhl and the filming brief was focused more on sealing together a mount and glazing package: a conservation technique which helps protect artwork from insect infestation and reduces the effects of airborne pollutants. Why not I thought and incorporated both techniques. So, now you get two techniques for the price of one!

Although this might be the least glamorous of the six videos, it's one of the most important. Anyone mounting artwork on paper should know how to T-hinge and construct a mount package. In fact, my Guild colleagues and I will be running workshops on this and other framing and business skills as part of this year's Fine Art Trade Guild Awards Weekend in May.



▲ Using mount slips

I like to have examples of lots of framing ideas on display in my shop; frames with stacked mouldings, multiple mounts, shadow mounts, wash lines, V-grooves and so on. I never seem to have the right one to demonstrate the technique I'm trying to convince my customer about though. Perhaps that's why I don't use mount slips as often as I could - if it's not right there in front of me, I just don't think about it.

As this video proves, mount slips are both simple to use and effective; the matching purple moulding and mount slip from Larson-Juhl's Confetti range look stunning on this print. Of course, great artwork always helps. You can have a lot of fun with bold images and strong colours and produce some really striking framing.