

Frame Design

by Tim Franer, CPF, CMG

Form & Function

Fabric-Wrapped Liners

An interesting component of picture framing is when liners are used to create a unique customized presentation. Liners are commonly used with oil paintings where a matting treatment might not work as well. Liners come in a variety of profile shapes, including a scoop, a slant, and a flat. The dimensional aspect of liners creates depth and space that give focus on the subject and element of design.

In the example seen here, two separate liners (a scoop and a slant) were used in conjunction with the other frame components. This framed sculpture of nude ladies was chosen to show the use of more than one liner. Also, the liners used here were unfinished raw wood, hand-wrapped in a custom fabric.

The challenge with this piece was to design and build a frame that would enhance the sculpture without competing with it. Other challenges were the creation of a sturdy mounting for the piece and creating enough depth to give a complete balance in design.

This sculpture was purchased in Paris and has a very European motif and feeling. This prompted me to lean toward an ornate moulding when choosing the outer frame. The subject matter in the sculpture also has a feeling and direction of movement. With this in mind, I chose this ornate, gold leaf moulding because of its swirling outer pattern and reverse type profile. I have found that the reverse profile works very well when stacking liners, rather than a scoop type frame. This is because the reverse profile provides depth in two



ways—for physical construction because it affords a generous rabbet height, and for aesthetics since the inner edge of a reverse profile brings the viewer's eye to a “crest” before leading the eye down in toward the artwork.

To wrap the liners, I chose a linen fabric with a green leaf pattern. (I also used this fabric for the mounting board that would serve as the background to the sculpture.) The fabric color and pattern blend very well with the subject and ornate gold leaf moulding.

There were four profiles that made up the finished frame—a 4" wide outer moulding; a 3" scoop liner; a gold leaf fillet to match the finish of the outer frame; and then a 1" slant liner. The backing board consists of a ½" plywood covered with ½" foam, and fabric applied on top of foam to give a padded appearance. The sculpture was applied to the fabric backing board from the back side with brackets. The outside dimensions are 48"x20".

Some Thoughts on Liners

There are a variety of fabrics that can be used to wrap liners, including linen, silk, and many more. From a design standpoint, virtually any type of fabric can be used

to suit the needs of the piece. I've used fabrics that are used for upholstery, and even suedes and leathers.

In terms of the different liner shapes, I have found that scoop liners work well in providing direction and width to a design. Flat profile liners also provide width effectively. Meanwhile, slant profile liners are a way to create depth in a design.

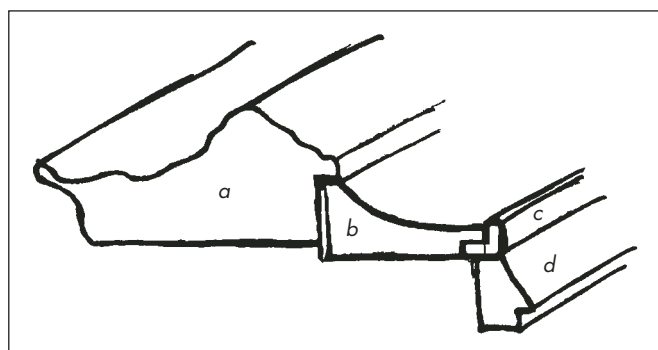
When wrapping fabric to liners I always assemble all the sides of my raw liner first and then cover continuously (with one piece) with fabric when possible. This method gives a very customized look and your corners don't look ragged from poor cutting or assembly. I also spray a white primer on the wood to create an even base for the adhesive.

If you have not tried cover liners and fabric wrapping, I highly recommend trying. In addition to raw liners, many suppliers offer custom liners that can be shipped to you already wrapped and ready for insertion into the frame. Whether you wrap your own liners, or order them wrapped, this type of creative work and craftsmanship reflected in your framing will help you develop a creative niche in your marketplace. ■

To read about another idea for designing with liners, look up this article on the PFM website (www.pictureframing-magazine.com) — “Creating A Faux Marble Liner,” by Gloria Applegate and Tom Sandler, March 1996.



A closer look reveals the use of the two liners and the fabric being used as a background to the artwork itself.



A cross-section of the frame and liner combination for this piece is shown here. There are four elements involved to build this look: (a) outer moulding; (b) scoop liner; (c) fillet; and (d) slant liner.

Tim Franer, CPF, CMG, has spent more than 30 years in the art and custom framing industry. Known for his creative design and skilled craftsmanship, Tim is a former gallery owner and is currently a chairholder with the Color Marketing Group. He is currently development, design, and educational consultant for Nielsen Bainbridge.

