

Frame Design

by Tim Franer, CPF, CMG

Form & Function

Multi-Opening Matting for Wedding Photos

During the spring and summer months, many framing opportunities come about by virtue of the wedding season. This presents many opportunities for picture framers to show creative framing design options. In many cases, we see wedding portraits displayed in ready-made frames that are not always the best choice for complementing or enhancing the photograph.

Framing wedding portraits is one way to gain a new customer for a lifetime because you are framing a special treasure for them. And this treasure will be displayed in a prominent location in his or her home where visitors will be sure to notice it. The three framed wedding photos in the example seen here illustrates several creative and simple techniques that can be utilized in creating a good frame design.

The Design & Layout

In this case, we have three separate photos: the bride, the groom, and the couple posing together. In reviewing the three photos, they seemed to lend themselves to being displayed together. They could, of course, work in their



Weddings photos can be creatively framed using textured mats and ornate mouldings.

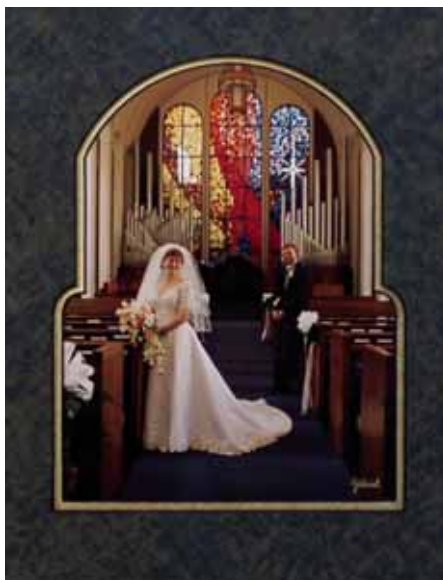
own individual frames. But it was decided to place these photographs in one frame using a mat with three openings. The subject and composition in each photo has a balanced format when laid out as one large frame.

The images reflect a formal setting, suggesting a formal frame and matting that would lend elegance to the overall finished composition.

The Matting

Three openings were selected as the layout for this piece. The center photo had very interesting detail in the background showing the archway, stained glass windows, and a pipe organ. With these components in mind, a cathedral cut double mat was created for the center opening. The cathedral design creates a strong focal point for the overall frame design; also, it shows creative mat techniques.

It was decided that the outer two photos would each be set in an oval double mat opening. The top mat chosen has a black and gold marbled finish with a black core. The bottom mat is a gold foil, black core board. These mats were chosen because, together, they help to create the desired formal presentation. A dark mat also helps to create a strong contrast between the framing and the color photographs. It emphasizes the subject matter more than if a neutral, lighter-colored mat was used and created a flat appearance.



The cathedral mat design for this photo worked well, not only because it related to the subject matter, but also because the arch added a sense of importance to the image.



The black and gold tones contained in all of the framing components helped to unify the design.

Ample spacing between each photo was used to give each subject its own space for easier viewing. Also, the outer mat border is wider than the spacing between each opening to give a sense of breathing room. The completions of this dark black and gold, marbled, black core mat gives us a focal point; the cathedral mat opening creates a very strong and well-balanced frame design.

The Frame

With the formality of the subject and the dark, marbled mat, it was a natural choice to use a substantial black with gold leaf moulding. This contemporary slant frame coordinated with the gold foil, inner mat to create a unified design.

In viewing the final layout and design we see a framed composition with various components. These components consist of good design in matting and frame selection while creating contrast between dark and light colors that make the photographs the focal point of this composition. The outside dimensions for this frame are 18"x40" with an outer mat border width of 4". ■

To read an article on cathedral mats, with instructions on cutting such a mat, visit the Article Index on the PFM website. Under the "Mat Design" category, look up "The Cathedral Mat," July 1999.

Tim Franer, CPE, 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.

