

Frame Design

by Tim Franer, CPF, CMG

Form & Function

A Rustic Wedding Portrait

Oftentimes, wedding photographs are framed by photographers and housed in ready-made frames that are quick and easy to use but that sometimes might not enhance the subject to its potential or create the desired design style. Framing photography, from all types of special events, is an opportunity to expand your creative design abilities to take a well framed-photograph up to the level of a personal masterpiece. In looking at this wedding photograph, I've discussed the elements that were considered to create a well-balanced, custom frame design for this image that was close to the owner's heart.



Design Influence

While the setting of this photograph reflects a Southwestern tone, its overall color, style, and form also suggested a Tuscany influence. The background items in the image such as the furnishings, the wall accents, and the lighting fixture give a sense of this rustic, yet sophisticated, feeling. The terracotta tile flooring, the background stucco wall, and the white archways played a part in the type of frame presentation that would be created. As I studied this photo, the presence of these various elements helped to create a strong design direction.

The Frame

A primary goal here was to increase the visual space around the subject matter (in this case, the bride) that would help the viewer to focus on the subject. Since a wide frame can often lend a sense of importance to a piece, I decided to use two frame mouldings that would create a desirable width.

The outer moulding was selected for its style, color, and dimension. Its scoop profile with a 5" width has a linear pattern that draws the eye inward. Furthermore, the antiqued, leafed finish of the moulding closely matches the color of the tile and the background wall color in the photo. The deep, earth tones of this frame worked to create a dark background that brings the subject to the forefront.

After selecting this moulding, I thought the design still needed another dimension to surround the photograph. The purpose was to create some

“breathing room” around the subject. (I decided against using matting in this design. I opted not to use a linen liner either because that would add a visual element that may have competed with the color scheme I was working toward.) To create the desired look, I chose a 2" wide moulding and stacked it inside the wider moulding. The inner moulding is

virtually flat, and I chose it mainly because its color and finish worked well with the outer moulding. This blending of the two profiles in both color and finish created a smooth transition from frame in toward subject.

The combination of both mouldings enhances the overall presentation with the presence of a 7" wide frame and making the bride the clear focal point.



Tones of gold and brown were utilized in the frame design to enhance the hues that were present in the photograph. (Mouldings used are from Roma Moulding collections.)

Use of Color

Color is a very important element when selecting the components for a frame design. The color and tone of both mouldings help to bring the subject to the forefront. Take note of the warm, rich leaf finishes that pick up various colors in the background. These rustic tones also worked well in contrasting with the bright white of the bride's dress. This design strategy made the focal point of the image “pop.” In addition, the antiqued, leafed finishes of the mouldings give an upscale look and sense of richness to this image, reflecting this formal occasion.

To complete the piece, an anti-reflective, UV-filtering glass was selected to further enhance and protect the photograph. ■

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.

