

# designer Q&A

## Expert Lisa Bowman shares tips on the art of framing

**Q. How important are art and framing to the overall effectiveness of interior design?**

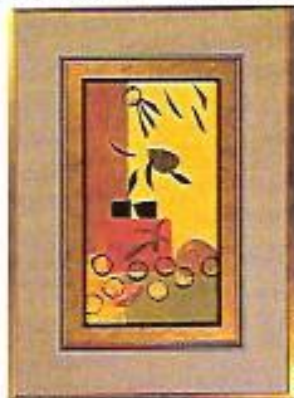
**A.** More often than not, what is chosen to adorn the walls is an afterthought and the framing component is overlooked altogether. A good designer will make artwork an integral part of the overall design concept from the beginning. The art and how it is framed round out the shell of the design. Remember, a vast or expensive art collection isn't necessary. Posters, personal photography, memorabilia—whatever you love—can enliven and enhance any interior.

**Q. I have a piece of art that I bought 12 years ago. I still love the print, but after I repainted and wallpapered, it doesn't match at all. Any suggestions?**

**A.** One of the easiest ways to incorporate versatility into one's décor is through framing. This means you don't have to invest in new artwork whenever you re-decorate—just re-mat and re-frame! Different mat and frame combinations can give the same piece of art entirely different looks. With the multitude of mats and frames on the market today, the possibilities are endless.

**Q. What are some of the new trends in framing?**

**A.** Creative use of matting adds a new dynamic to the art of framing. Innovative textured and printed mats can add interest to art without overpowering it. Textures such as chenille, leather, rice paper and prints can echo aspects of the art and enhance the presentation. Stacking consists of two or more



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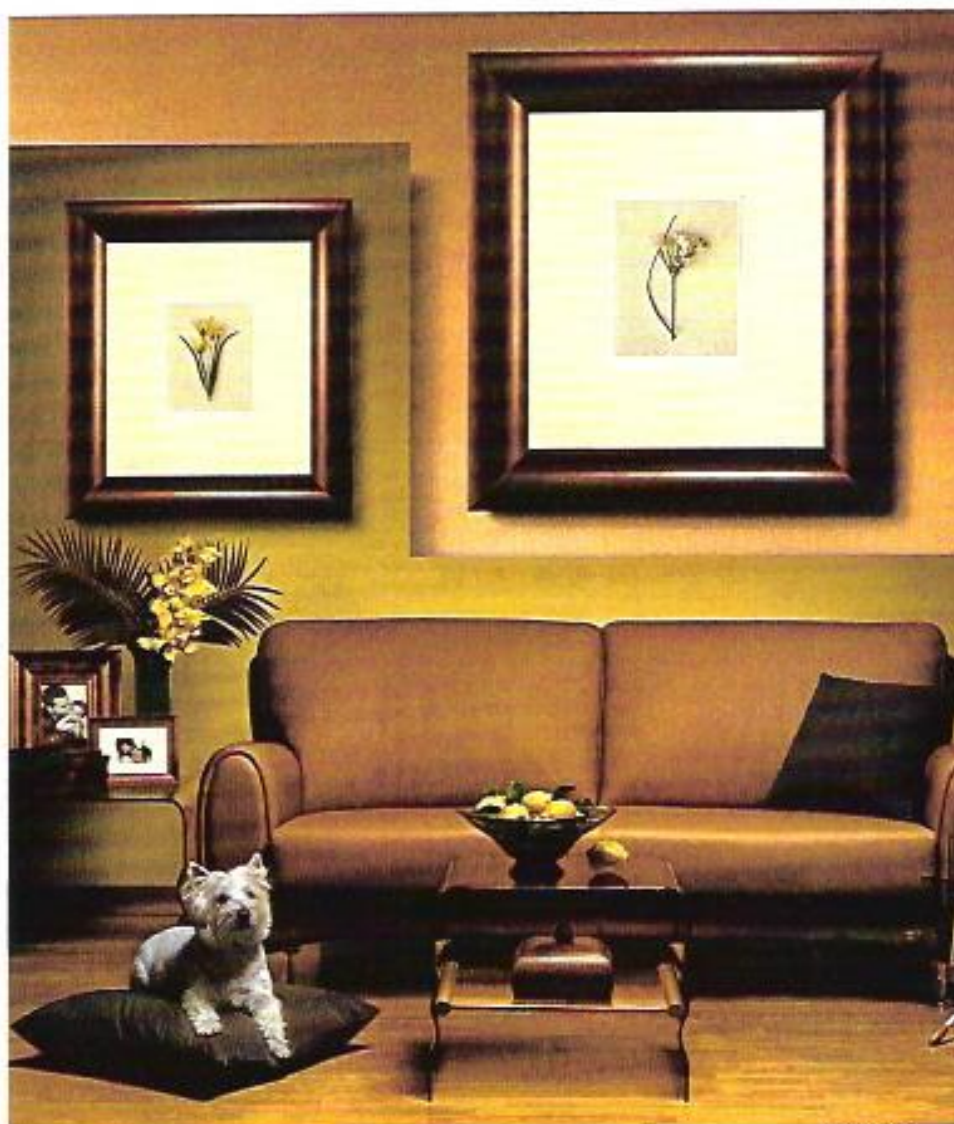
mouldings combined into a single frame. Fillets (small frames outlining the inside of a mat) can intensify the effect of the outside frame. When you combine moulding colors and styles, you can highlight various components of the art and create a wonderful sense of harmony between art and frame.

**Q. I purchased five small etchings on a recent vacation. I would like to hang them on a large wall, but I'm afraid they are too small. Is there anything I can do?**

**A.** Large mat proportions are very popular and can be very effective in your decorating scheme. Expand the horizons of smaller works by choosing large mats to create greater impact. Notice how much more drama you can bring to a piece with the use of a larger mat as it sets off the art and makes it the focal point of the room. Furthermore, oversized mats create a strong statement as the visual lines of the framed piece can be varied from vertical to horizontal.

**Q. I have so much trouble determining the best way to display my artwork. Do you have any suggestions?**

**A.** There really are no hard and fast rules. Odd-numbered groupings provide the



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most harmonious combinations. Clustering (organizing by subject, size and/or color) is a solution to the challenge of displaying several works together. Individual pieces need space to be noticed, so give each enough room to really stand out. Stylish floor easels get the art off the wall and into the room, and are very versatile since they can be moved from location to location. Lean framed art against a wall on mantles and shelves to give the room a more informal look. Stairways are a beautiful showcase for a few larger pieces, and hallways can house a series of art when illuminated by spotlights on a track or cable.

**Q. What type of accessories can be used to embellish frames? Can frames be used for anything besides artwork?**

**A.** To answer your first question, corner ornaments can be added to both wood and metal frames to add that extra designer touch. Small frames can be hung from decorative hangers, and larger frames from decorative cording or ribbon. As far as alternative frame uses, virtually any moulding can be utilized to create that perfect mirror to accent your room. How about a shadowbox for your favorite collectibles? There is no better way to display the things that mean the most to you. ■

*Lisa A. Bowman, Allied Member ASID, has a bachelor's and a master's degree in design and is a Guild Member of the Professional Picture Framers Association. With extensive expertise in art and framing, she has been serving residential and commercial clients in the Denver area since 1988.*

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