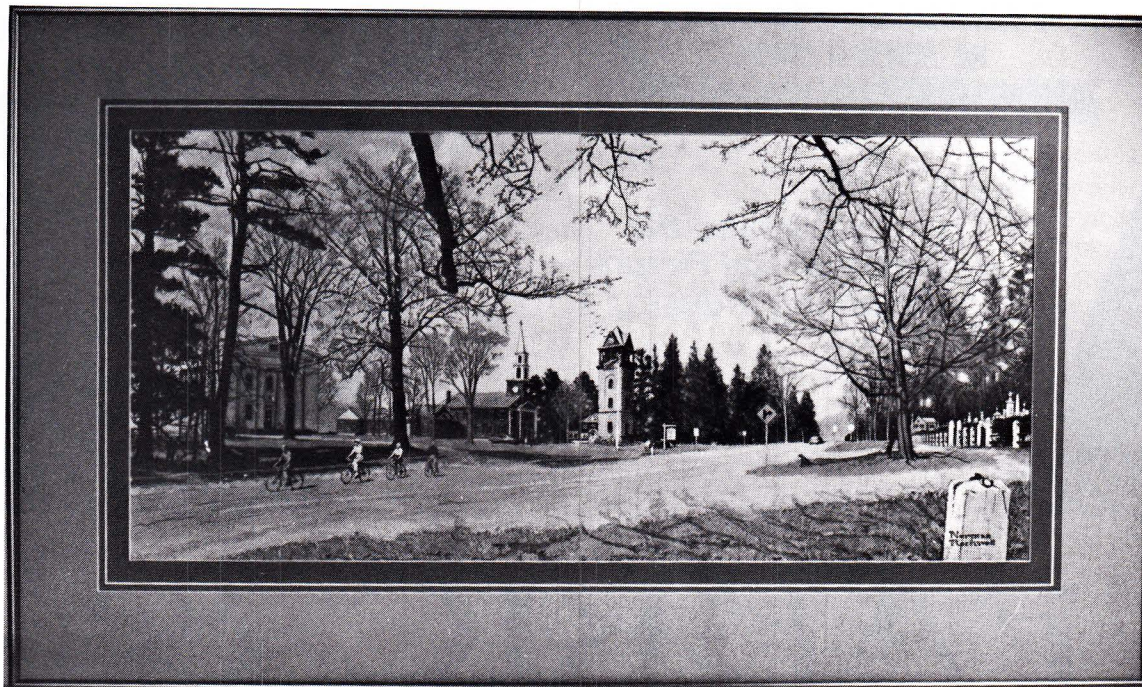


# MASTERING MOUNTING



## Mounting For Matting

by Chris A. Paschke, CPF

“**B**uilding a better mousetrap” generally refers to the development and investment in new products or gadgets which improve an existing process, but this time I hope to improve your mousetrap with no additional investment on your part. Anytime there is an alternative method which has a more time efficient approach to completing a framing job and it may readily be implemented simply by modifying a procedure with no additional investment ... it ought to be seriously looked into. Such is the case with this month’s topic of centering mounted posters, photos and artwork that are scheduled to be matted as part of the total framing project.

A great deal of time may be lost when attempting to precisely align or position artwork to a previously sized window mat in preparation for mounting. There are at least three different aligning procedures which

come to mind, the first being to size all materials, cut the window, lay the mat over the loose poster and mount board, shift all materials until properly aligned, hold the poster in place, set mat aside, mark placement, then mount where indicated.

The window mat is then realigned and struck in place using ATG tape. Pretty antiquated and a little “iffy,” I might add.

Another option, which will cut down drastically on the headaches, is to securely hinge the window mat to the long side of the previously sized mounting board with a linen tape. This will eliminate any shifting while marking for proper placement prior to mounting. Although this hinged unit holds all parts in place, since the mat is hinged to the mount board prior to mounting, it becomes part of the entire mounting unit, a new headache. Now it must be mounted like an open book (diagram 1) and

although it will not harm the mat, it is bulky and doesn’t work at all for multiple bites.

The quickest way to ensure alignment of the designated window mat over mounted artwork is to prepare all materials by cutting them slightly oversized, except for the window mat which is sized and cut (as usual) to exacting measurements. Mount onto the larger board, then trim it to size rather than sizing, hinging, measuring, marking, remeasuring, checking and painstakingly verifying all centering marks, only to vacuum mount the print which may have unknowingly slipped and now no longer lines up with the mat window as expected.

### Tacking

This brings me to the issue of “tacking” artwork prior to mounting if a cold vacuum frame or heat system of mounting is to be used.

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The most professionally accepted, least harmful and probably proper method of tacking, the "Z-method" (see *Mounting Photographs*, PFM Sept. 1991) is not generally required during this particular procedure, since it is designed for preventing the tacking iron from ever coming into contact with the surface of the photo or artwork to be mounted (diagram 2).

In my constant attempt to shed light onto assorted "exceptions to the rules", tacking, like anything else, depends on the desired end product. If mounting in a mechanical press smaller than the poster, it requires taking "bites" to complete the mounting process. Therefore, tacking placement directly relates to the total bites required to complete the mounting

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Diagram 1

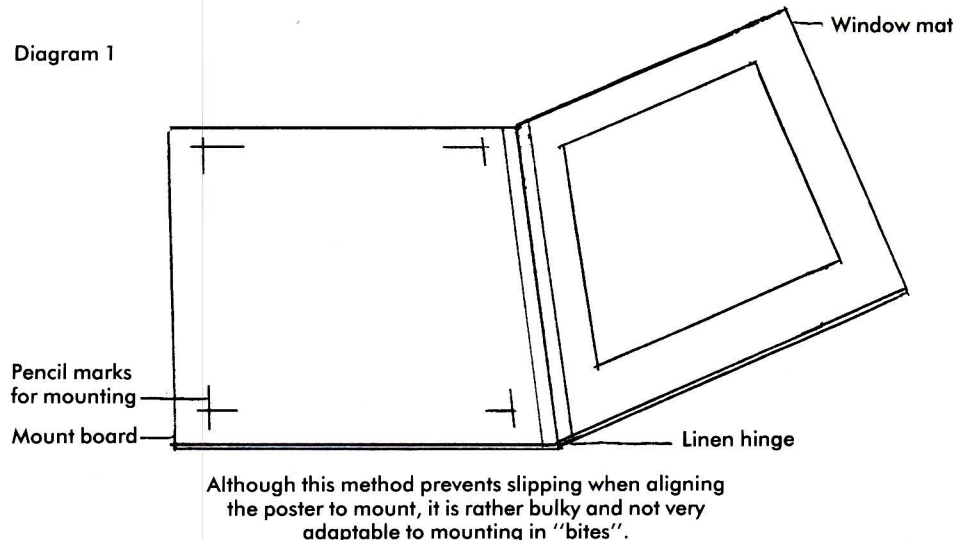
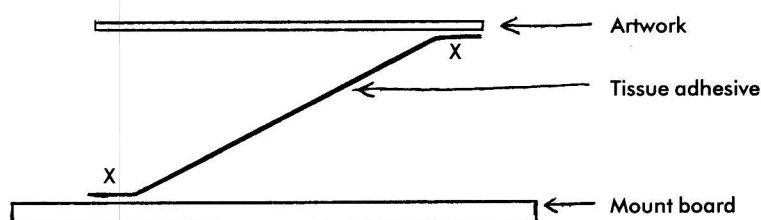


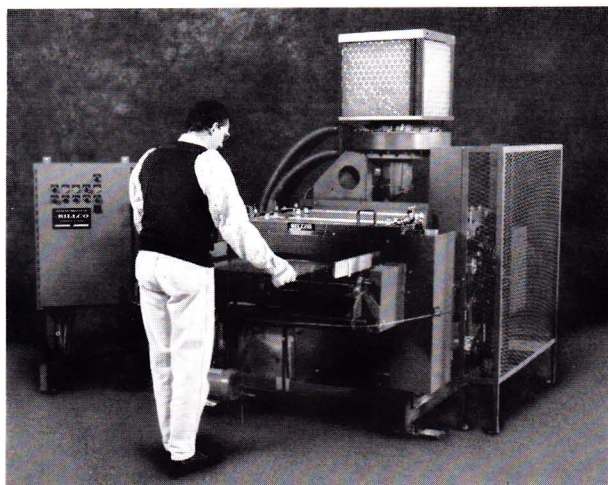
Diagram 2



The "X" indicates the placement and side of the iron to tack. The mount board may be slightly oversized and trimmed after actual mounting is completed. See PFM, September 1991 for additional information.

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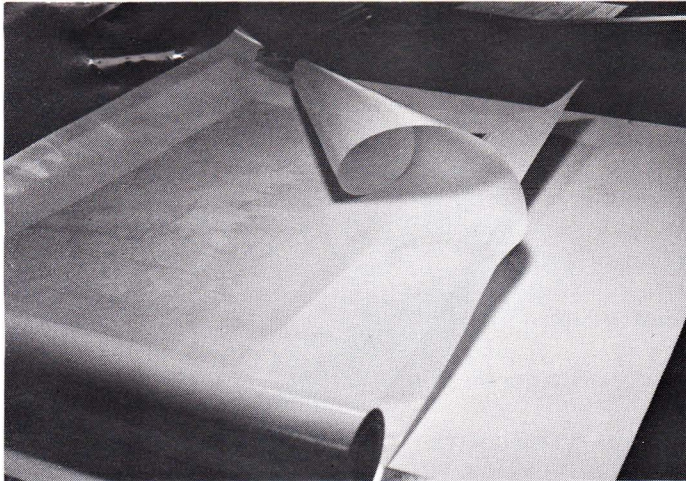
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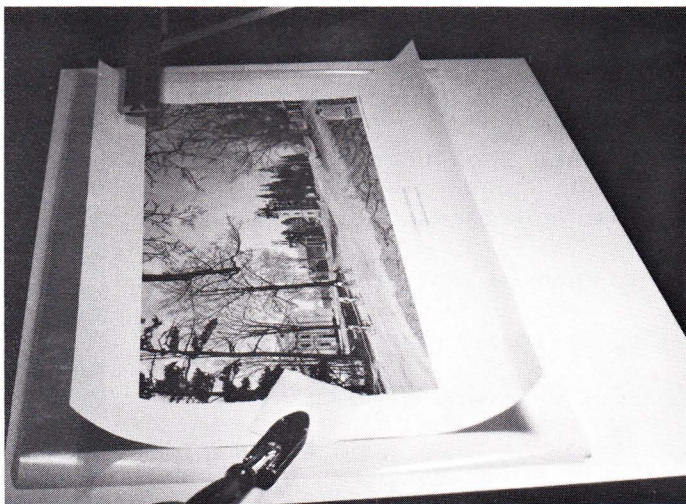
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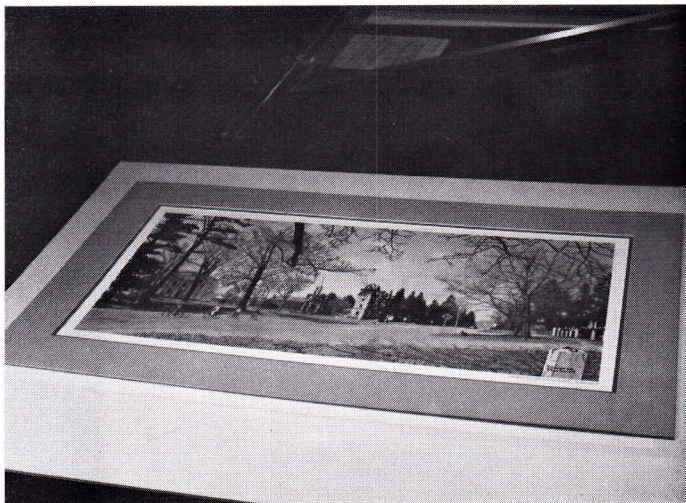




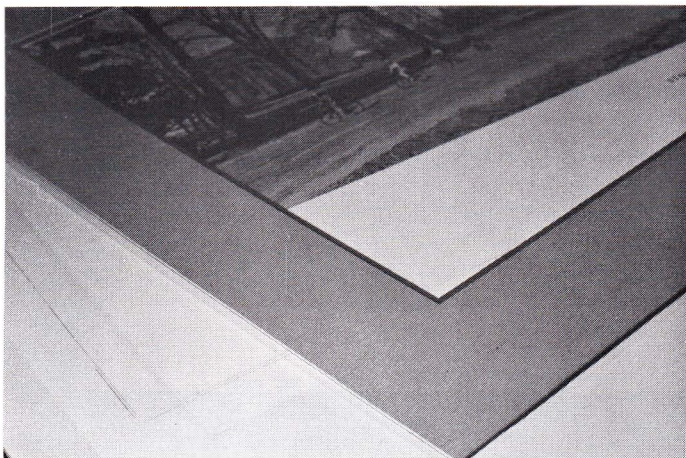
1. Though the sample is using a full 32" x 40" board for mounting, you only need a mount board larger than the completed project dimensions. Cut the dry adhesive larger than the print and smaller than the board. Make certain all release paper is clean, not wrinkled and larger than the items being mounted.



2. Tack the print and adhesive to the mount board using release paper. Since the window mat will cover most of the white border of this print, there is no fear of damaging the image during tacking.



3. After the print has been mounted, whether dry, wet, spray or pressure sensitive adhesive is used, reposition the readied window mat into exact position and prepare to mark for final trim.



4. Correctly holding the mat in place, draw a pencil line around the outer perimeter of the mat to indicate the outer dimensions for trimming. Once trimmed, the mat may be hinged or ATG taped to the mount board as desired.

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(see *Biting The Art That Feeds You*, PFM Sept. 1992).

If a vacuum frame or hot vacuum press is used, and since the mat will cover the outer edges of the mounted artwork, tacking may be located just off the image in the border on one end of the surface border of the artwork (photo 2). In any event, the tacking process will prevent slipping and once again expedite the entire process. Although the photos in this article illustrate the use of dry adhesives, the same centering process may be applied to wet, spray, pressure sensitive and heat activated mount boards as well.

### Preparation

Using your "home" process, begin by sizing the mount board slightly larger than the *completed* project to be framed. A full 32" x 40" piece of 3/16" foam board easily accommodates the 22" x 36" poster to be matted and framed, though it need not be a full sized sheet. By offsetting it to one side, the board may still be trimmed later and recycled into spacers or smaller projects.

Lay the poster on the board and cut a piece of tissue adhesive *larger than the print but smaller than the board* (photo 1). Relatively center the print by eye onto the oversized mount board, taking into account the completed size or outer dimensions (OD) of the framed project and allowing adequate width for the mat. I use the term "centering" loosely, since placement will not literally be centered, but slightly toward the top of this particular foam board. Tack the print on the end to be fed into the press first to prevent slipping or buckling, and remember to tack off the edge which will be covered by the mat (photo 2). Always use a piece of release paper between the iron and the print because it is simply a "good habit" to get into. It is very easy to develop bad or sloppy habits; then breaking or modifying them can be a real "bear."



## MASTERING MOUNTING

### Centering The Mat

Mount the print as usual, then take the readied mat and lay it on top of the cooled mount to line it up for marking (photo 3). Note the excess of foam board on all sides which now needs to be trimmed away. Once proper alignment is achieved, hold the mat in place and carefully draw a pencil line around the outer perimeter of the mat (photo 4). Remove the mat one last time and trim to the pencil line with a straightedge and X-Acto™, mat cutter or wall cutter. Once trimmed to size, hinge the window mat to the mounted board using a strong linen tape and proceed to fitting.

Sometimes the simplest of suggestions can be the biggest time saver of all. Whether doing a series of identical pieces for a large production job or a one-of-a-kind piece, steps that may be taken to expedite the overall process will not only make you more time effective, but will ultimately make you more money. Granted, there will be a little additional waste when it comes to products being used, and you may very well decide that the additional time required to align, mark, check, tack, mount, cross your fingers and complete is less costly than the additionally used materials, but only you can make that call.

As a second generation framer, I know my father would have chosen the traditional way of finger crossing and cutting all of his boards to actual size right from the beginning . . . because it was cheaper! But then again, he didn't think his time was worth anything, and he never did climb out of the spray mounting rut either.

PFM

*Chris A. Paschke, CPF, a second generation picture framer, owns Designs Ink, Oxford, Connecticut. Ms. Paschke continues as 1993 instructor for Seal Products' HOW-2 educational workshop series, is on the 1993 PPFA faculty, and is an independent lecturer and demonstrator at industry events around the country.*

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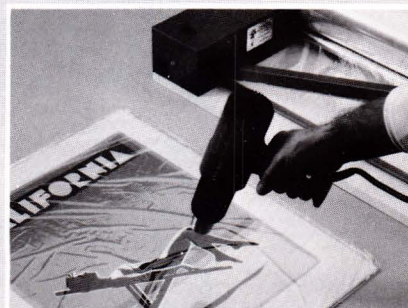


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