

# MASTERING MOUNTING

## Remove, Remount, Refit: The Redo Dilemma

by Chris Paschke, CPF



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**W**e are all in business to make money and earn a living, but I feel that there is something inherently wrong with profiting from another's mistakes, inadequacies, or problems. I've often said that framers are problem-solvers, but solving the problem of a bad framing job is not the kind of design challenge we're looking for. When a problem framing job comes through my door with an unhappy customer attached to it, it's not a challenge, it's a redo dilemma.

In a social environment like the United States, economic levels will vary, and it's necessary for framers (and other businesses) to target a certain market segment. That's simple competition, the American way. Because of this, framers, unbeknownst to them, may share certain customers. A customer may elect to use one framer for simple economy posters and inexpensive items while selecting an upper end framer for their limited editions and specialty design work.

### The Problem

One of my pet peeves, however, is when a regular customer comes in with a piece of artwork framed by another retailer, with a problem. One of the most common problems are buckles in the mat board or ripples in the mounting itself (Photo 1). This particular framing problem became evident within the first few weeks

after the original framing was completed.

Note that the mat has been fitted too tightly into the metal moulding, leaving no allowance for expansion of the paper mat boards (Photo 2). As the boards expanded during periods of increased humidity, they buckled in the confined space. The liner mat had not buckled as much since it was only a lip about 1" wide, which allowed for some expansion.

The other problem was a rippling or bubbling across the lower portion of the poster. The print was lifting from the backing it had been spray mounted to (Photo 3).

### Unfitting and Unmounting

The mat warped between the spring clips: the areas of least resistance that allowed the board to expand (Photo 4). Also note, however, that the mat remained buckled even after the spring clips were removed (Photo 5). This may be an argument for the use of full-length strips of mat or foam board as filler, rather than intermittent pressure points, but that's another issue.

The spray adhesive had lifted, forming additional paper buckling, and had also released along the entire right half of the poster. The left half of the poster was still fairly well mounted to the backing, so the first problem was to remove the rest of

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the print of the backing.

By applying heat from a mechanical press (an iron could also be used) the spray adhesive was reactivated and the print was lifted from the backing. A 180°F press for one minute was used for this example. By placing two-sided release paper between the poster and the backing board as sections of the poster released, premature remounting of the poster was prevented (Photo 6).

## Remounting

Once the poster was removed, it was remounted to a new piece of mounting board. Whether you decide to wet, vacuum, dry mount or elect to use a pressure sensitive board, the poster should be smooth and flat prior to remounting. This may be achieved by any number of standard methods of flattening. I prefer to place the print between two sheet of non-wrinkled release paper in a low temperature press for a few minutes. This will both flatten and dry the print in preparation for remounting.

It is important to remember that wrinkles in release paper may be transferred to the print, as can wrinkles in the felt blanket in the bottom of a heat vacuum press. Always use

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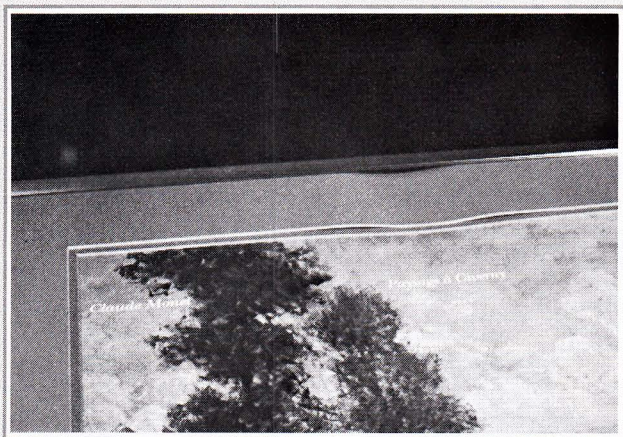


Photo 1. This photo illustrates a common problem in framing. If there is no allowance for expansion through humidity and temperature changes, the mat board(s) will buckle.

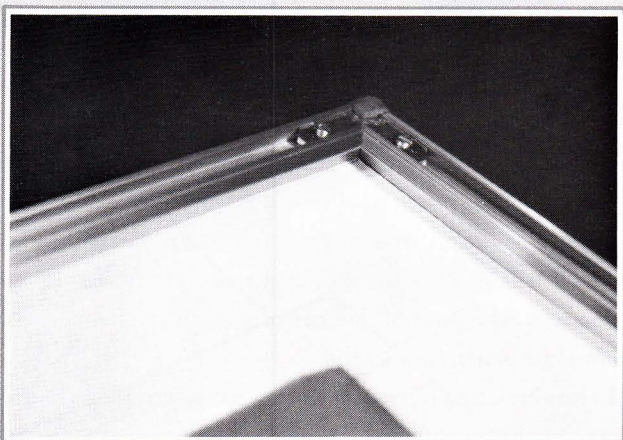


Photo 2. The mat boards were cut exactly to the full length of the metal moulding, allowing no clearance for expansion of the boards. There should be  $\frac{1}{16}$ " to  $\frac{1}{8}$ " allowance all the way around, depending on the total size.

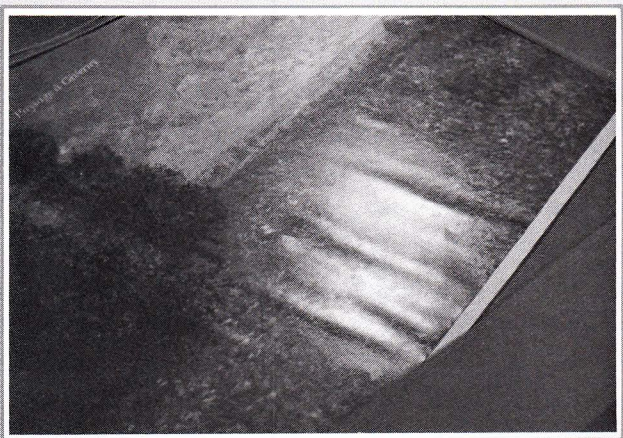


Photo 3. The lower half of the spray mounted poster separated from the mounting board.

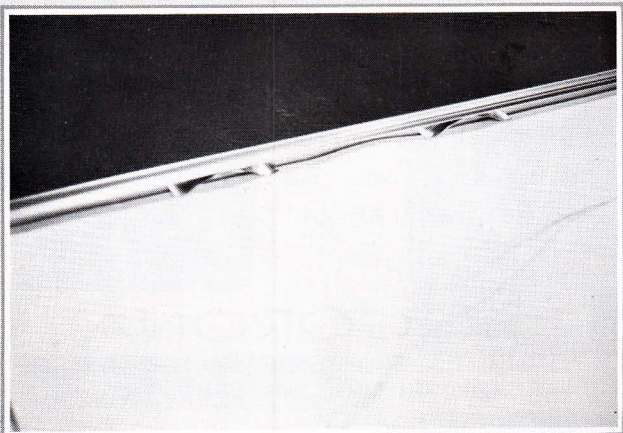


Photo 4. The mat boards had warped between the clips in an attempt to release the tension caused by their expansion.

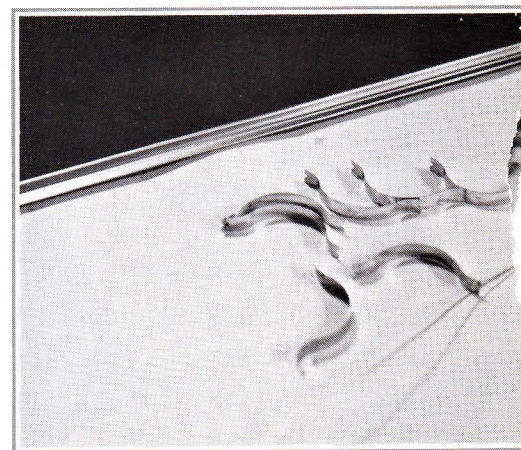


Photo 5. Even upon removal of the clips, the boards remained warped.



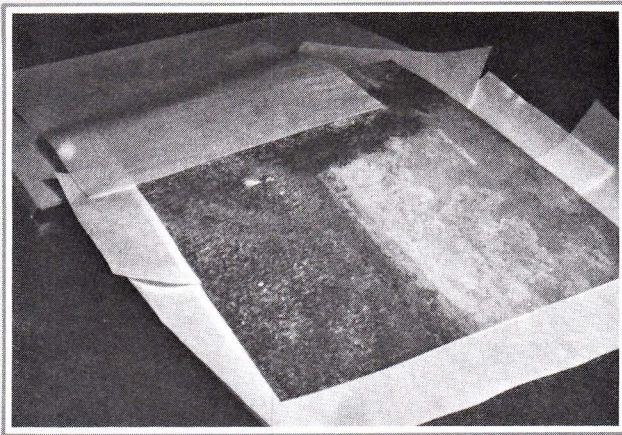


Photo 6. To remove the print from the backing board, the adhesive was reactivated by the application of heat. Two-sided release paper was sandwiched between the print and the backing to prevent readhesion. When heated in a 180°F press for one to two minutes, the print peeled off the board.

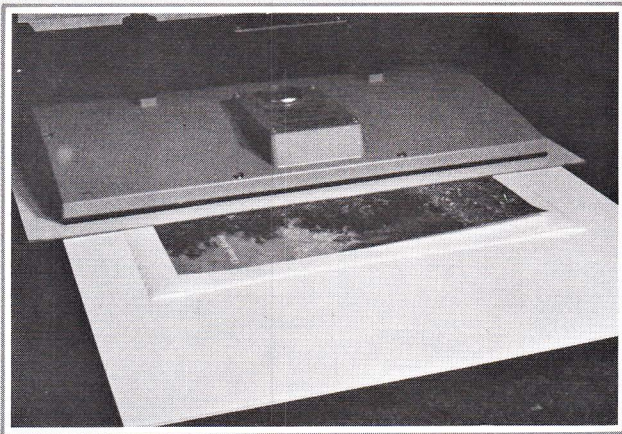


Photo 7. Once released, the flattened poster was remounted to foam board using dry mount tissue slightly larger than the print. This saved time since the poster was to be matted again.

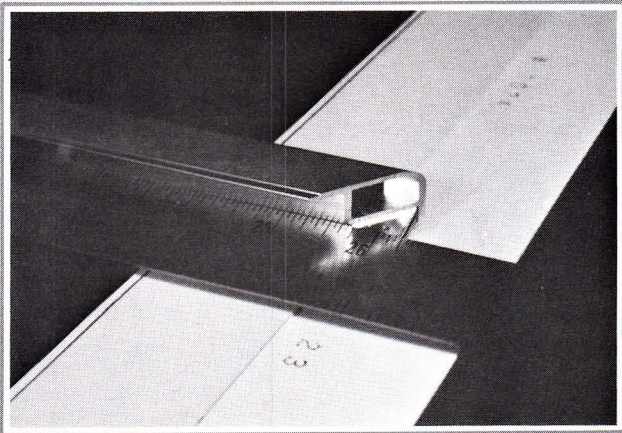


Photo 8. Note that the moulding measures 25 1/2", plus 1/8" allowance.

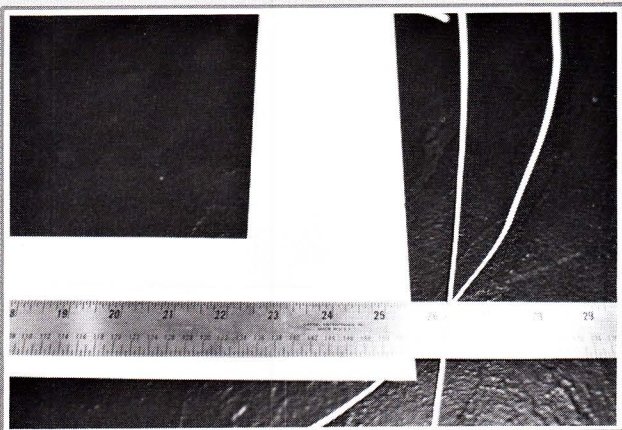


Photo 9. The mats needed to be trimmed to create the proper fitting allowance; 1/8" was trimmed from the side and the bottom.

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a critical eye and attempt to troubleshoot potential mistakes before they become additional problems.

Since the original mats were to be reused, they were also flattened in the heat press prior to reassembly. The warpage was set into the boards, and they would not lie flat even after they were removed from the frame.

This poster was drymounted using a float method with a sheet of breathable, permanent dry mount tissue. The tissue was cut slightly larger than the poster but smaller than the foam board (Photo 7). This allowed the mats to be placed easily for alignment and sizing (see *Mounting for Matting*, PFM March 1993).

### Refitting

The mats needed to be trimmed to accommodate the original metal moulding prior to refitting. The moulding had been chopped for a 25 1/2" x 32 1/2" with a 1/8" allowance (Photo 8). The mats needed to be trimmed to fit the actual chop size, leaving the 1/8" for expansion (Photo 9).

After the mats were trimmed, they were hinged to the top edge of the sized, mounted poster using 1" wide linen tape (Photo 10). In the original

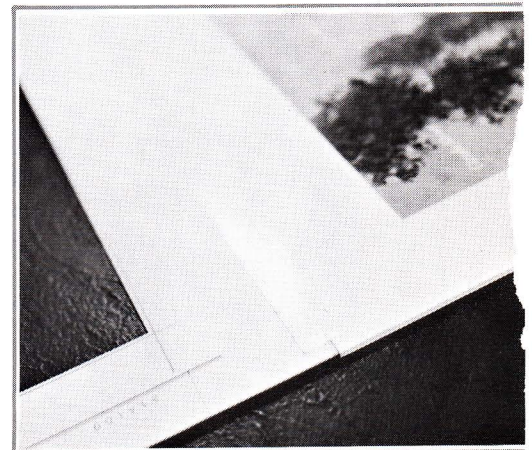


Photo 10. The newly mounted full-sized backing foam board was hinged along the top with 1" wide linen tape.



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assembly, the poster was mounted on a 4 ply board just 1" larger than the mat window opening, which was then masking taped on all sides into that opening.

Foam board strips, rather than spring clips, were used to fill the space inside the metal moulding and linen tape surrounds the back edges of the moulding to prevent the filler strips from slipping (Photo 11). The removed, remounted and refitted poster is a finely mounted, non-buckled poster with unwarped double mats with the original moulding, glass, mats and print (Photo 12). A new foam board backing, cut full size (with the proper allowance), was required for mounting along with assorted removal, flattening and remounting steps.

### Case Summary

It is easy to see why the mats buckled; there was no allowance within the frame. But why did the spray adhesive let go? The application could have been uneven, the mount might not have been weighted after mounting, or the boards might have still contained some moisture when mounted. Always remember the elements of a successful mounting: time, temperature, pressure, moisture (TTPM).

The customer was happy with the successful "redo". So why didn't she take the problem back to the original framer? Perhaps she feared she would get bandages rather than repair. For whatever the reason, I now have a new customer.

We all hate to fix mistakes, especially when they aren't our fault. During the busy season, the last thing we want to do is fix something that should have been done right the first time. Yet although it is frustrating, it is another frame job!

Happy and profitable holidays—see you in the new year! 🍀

Photo 11. With the frame ready for wire, the filler strips are held in place with a sealing strip of 1" wide linen tape.

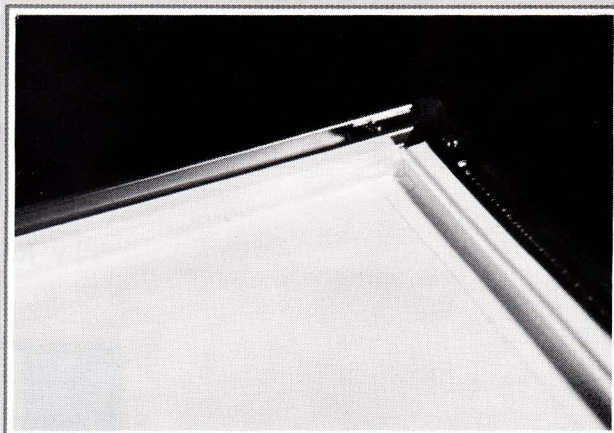
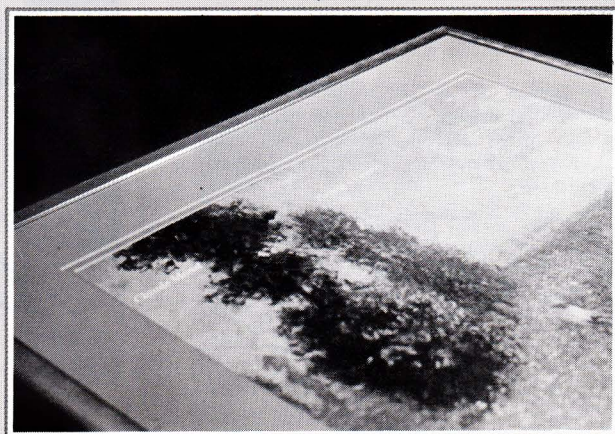


Photo 12. The completed "redo" looks great. The same moulding, glazing, mats and poster were used while the print was remounted to a full-sized foam board hinged properly to the mat package.



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