



WCAF

THE PREMIER EVENT

The excited buzz of the attendees, exhibitors, and instructors carried throughout the Paris Las Vegas Hotel early Sunday morning while the staff readied themselves for the eighteenth annual West Coast Art & Frame Expo. Behind the registration desk, the World Skyline desk welcomed attendees from 42 countries in over 20 different languages.

With every passing year, the WCAF Expo strives to exceed expectations. This year we invited new instructors, created new seminars, and included returning favorites. Exhibitors from around the world gathered in Las Vegas, transforming the trade show floor to a state-of-the-art experience.

Each booth delivered the message unique to its services, while still tying in creative trends in the art and framing industry. “The most useful thing about coming to the show is visiting the different manufacturers and seeing what the trends are and where they’re going,” said Ed Cooley, owner of Ed Cooley Fine Art of Texas, “If I can get ahead of the curve, then I’m better off than someone who doesn’t come to the show.”

Experience the Expo

The backdrop for the trade show floor was the elegant Paris convention center with exhibits displaying classic and contemporary styles. The exhibitors were excited to display their new products. “Getting to talk with our customers is a great opportunity to get all of our customers in one place and show our products,” explains Jen Gramm, director of marketing at Tru Vue. “It’s really about talking to the framers and getting in

EXPO 2017

FOR THE ART & FRAMING INDUSTRY



by Sara LaPonte

front of them and having conversations about our products and what we have going on.”

Throughout the trade show, each exhibit engaged the attendees with new displays, creative ideas, and trend-setting solutions for their businesses or upcoming projects. Peterboro Matboards had a carnival themed display, created out of their own matboard products. World Art Group featured a variety of prints, posters, and limited edition giclees in their modern booth.

Roma Moulding had an impressive exhibit, complete with their moulding presentation and energetic music. “This is our Super Bowl,” said Marty Taylor from Roma Moulding, “We come here to play. It’s great to be here and show our culture of the company.”

This year, Tru Vue celebrated its 70th Anniversary. The company hosted a reception open to all who attended the show. Jane Boyce, president of Tru Vue, extended her appreciation for the company’s 70 successful years in the business. She announced the winners of their 5th annual framing competition. The winners and finished pieces can be found on the Tru Vue website. Boyce also unveiled the new segment on Home Designs featuring their products and Meg Glasgow, owner of Finer Frames and speaker at the National Conference.

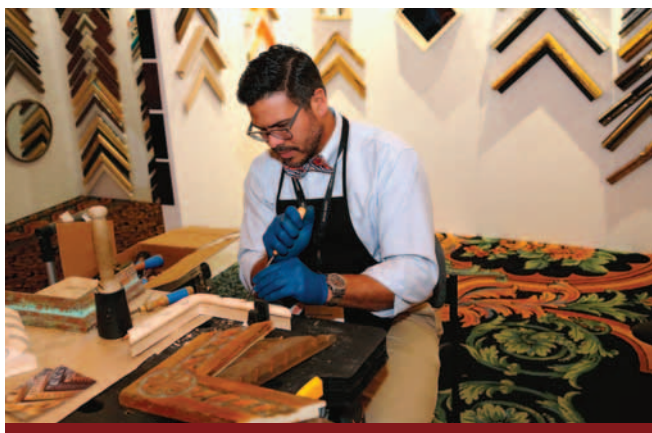


Attendees visited the Larson-Juhl booth to see their newest collections for 2017.

Returning to the WCAF Expo this year was the ever-popular Design Star: Framing Edition competition, sponsored by Larson-Juhl. Enthusiastic competitors submitted photos of their pieces before the Expo. Categories included Objects, Mirrors, Textiles, Art on Canvas, Documents, Art on Paper, and Photography. The winner of the 2017 Design Star was Malia Bolt of Purple House Gallery from Gainesville, GA. Her design was an artistically framed custom mirror.

“The WCAF Expo gives us a chance to have a specific, targeted time to introduce new lines to the industry. Everything you need to be in this business is here—the people, the companies, the knowledge, and the education.

Josh Eichner, Executive Vice President, FramERICA



The Frame Masters' booth featured live demos of specialty hand-carved frames.

Educational Opportunities

AT THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE

With so many new trends and business ideas available, the National Conference takes great measures to present the most up-to-date information in the framing industry.

A new focus on digital technology, marketing, and social media has been incorporated into the National Conference seminars. CEO and co-founder of Frames and Stretchers, Erick Rios, led a new seminar, 'Social Media and Digital Storytelling'. An attendee claimed, "I loved the information provided and the perspective on how to successfully use social media in our particular industry".

Another sold-out session was 'Trend Forward: Influencing the Path to Purchase in Today's Digital Age,' with Ginger Hartford, key account manager at Larson-Juhl and 25 year framing industry veteran. "Ginger's class was excellent," said Koby Marowelli, president of Image Gallery in Michigan, "She had some really great insights on how to create that path to purchase for your clients by engaging them online and through a better in-store experience."

There were several free seminars offered on producing digital prints. Canon, Epson and many of their distributors had a strong presence in both seminars and on the trade show floor. When asked about the National Conference, National Sales Manager of Digital Technology Group, Gary Barker responded, "It's a great mix of people,



National Conference attendees advanced their frame making skills with several of the water gilding seminars and workshops that were offered.

of learning things in the classes and workshops, and seeing new things on the sales floor. The classes are a blend of technique, craftsmanship, tangible skills, industry knowledge, and how you can advance your business and reach new markets."

The PPFA held its annual convention at The West Coast Art & Frame Expo, offering many educational seminars and certification courses for both aspiring and established picture framers. Some of the speakers included author and educator Hugh Phibbs, Russ Wood, owner of Grey Owl Framing, Chris A. Paschke CPF, GCF, CMG, owner of Designs Ink, and many more.

There were many highlighted social gatherings hosted by the PPFA. The Welcome to Vegas reception featured chapters from across the United States and Canada, where they could mingle and display their individuality within the PPFA.

The International Framing Competition Cocktail Reception featured the winners of the 2017 International Framing Competition and was followed by The President's Dinner, hosted by PPFA President, Greg Norris CPF and emceed by Cliff Wilson MCPE, owner of Framed in Tatnuck. All were well-attended events for PPFA members and non-members alike.



In front of a packed audience, Jay Goltz, president and founder of Artists Frame Service Inc., discussed cash flow vs. profit challenges and how to identify the difference.



Hal Schmitt, director and lead instructor of LIGHT Photographic Workshops, brought his photography class to the Valley of Fire to capture brilliant images of the beautiful landscape.



Master restorer, Giovanni Bucchi, passionately explains the intricacy and skill involved in gilding historic frames.

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Gary Barker, National Sales Manager, Digital Technology Group



John Ranes II, CPF, leads this all day workshop on the basics of mat cutting. Retailers walked away with a fundamental understanding and skill set needed to produce great mats every time.



Chris A. Paschke, CPF, GCF, CMG, and Owner of Designs Ink led numerous seminars on mounting techniques, all designed to help retailers to achieve perfect mounts no matter what the challenge.

In this Crescent sponsored seminar, Greg Perkins, CPF, discussed the importance of understanding generational differences and customer buying habits in order to build a successful business.



Forward Thinking for Picture Framers

Being a part of the art and framing industry requires concentration in creativity, business expansion, and customer relations. This year's Expo offered, "Successful Retailing: A Panel Discussion," to explore the demands of today's art and framing industry. President and founder of Artists Frame Service, Inc., Jay Goltz, led the Wednesday morning session with Paul MacFarland, founder of Art Preservation Resources; Rhonda Feinman, owner of Rhonda Feinman Custom Frames; Chris Heffter, Valiani sales manager for Crescent Cardboard Company; and Jay Kogan, president of Hall of Frames. The panel shared their ideas and personal experiences on improving the details of small businesses in order to become more profitable. The take away message was the power of entrepreneurship, having confidence in your product, and believing in a customer-driven business.

The new West Coast Art & Frame App made for simple trade show floor navigation and also provided seminar locations for the National Conference. All the information you needed was at your fingertips. The attendees were calling this convenient, easy-to-use App their 'digital suitcase.'

Exhibitors, speakers, and attendees alike were able to benefit from every aspect of the Expo and National Conference this year. "Whether you're a seasoned frame shop owner or new to the business, there's always something new to learn at the WCAF Expo and National Conference," said Trade Show Director, Debbie Salmon. Attendee Vetta Ghosoph of Masters Gallery in California claimed, "The framed examples are beautiful, innovative; a lot of things our customers are asking for. It's exciting to see and the quality of the exhibits is excellent. Everybody is professional, and there are wonderful show specials. To anyone



Jane Boyce, president of Tru Vue, Jen Gramm, director of marketing for Tru Vue, and Francine Hackerott, winner of the Tru Vue Framing Competition.

who hasn't come to the show, come next year."

The art and framing business broadens its horizons every year, and so does the WCAF Expo. The 2018 West Coast Art & Frame Expo will be returning to the Paris Las Vegas Hotel and Casino January 22-24, with the National Conference starting a day earlier. For more information, visit wcafexpo.com. **PFM**

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Robin Gentry, of B&J Gallery, and Tim Franer, CPF, with his First Place award for the Open Competition.