

Framing the Essence of Time, in 3-D

There are many resources available to research the various methods. It can be a lot of fun to create an unusual frame with a subject in 3-D.

By DiAnna Tindell

Throughout the ages, artists have been commissioned to paint the portraits of children and pets in various stages of growth. More recently, photographs have taken the place of portraits as a means for families to preserve memories.

But this type of memory is two dimensional in nature and can never fully capture the essence of its subject. There is now available, however, the means by which a subject can be memorialized in 3-D, a picture in time that would include molded cast parts of the subject as part of the framework.

How successful you are with the final frame results would, of course, be influenced by the willingness of the participating subject. Whether you have decided to attach parts to an existing frame, or make the entire frame with the sum of its parts, it may be necessary to practice the positioning.

This would be sort of like having someone sit for a portrait. For example, you can have them actually hold on to an area such as the corner of a tile while the mold material is applied to their hand.

Most mold materials will cure rather fast, but it is important the part being copied remain very still in the exact position required. If the design of the poses is not determined in advance, so the molds are created at those angles, some molding materials do not allow enough flexibility to change position.

To proceed and make molds of individual hands, feet and faces, the subject should first be "tested" at a small spot with the molding material of choice. This test should be helpful to determine if any allergic reaction is a possibility.

Various products used in the dental industry to make a mold of teeth impressions are relatively safe. Keep in mind that some individuals are allergic to latex and some moulding compounds might contain that ingredient.

If allergic, perhaps a barrier of material can be placed on the surface first. If there is a lot of hair near the area(s) being molded, care should be taken to avoid coating them. The mold material(s) can grab hold and pull delicate hair, eyelashes, eyebrows, etc.

Most mold products are gentle and do not even require a release agent. Use common sense and avoid covering air passages and any fragile areas of the subject.

Another factor to consider is what type of material(s) will be cast within it. If a pour is required to fill the mold, a support system may be needed to prop the mold into position as the casting liquid levels and cures. Many types of



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Frame with hands and feet casted of Alyssa - age 6 all dressed up in the photo within.



Volunteer Alyssa Marie Laughlin has fun with the molding processes.



Not famous Grauman's Chinese Theatre, but still a moment in time for Bethany - age nine with hand prints found in

systems can be developed to serve this purpose, such as a mother mold, box mold, sand/rice box and more.

If the mold requires careful monitoring, it may be best to use a clear product to copy the parts. In that way, the casting material(s) can be visibly monitored as they fill the clear mold. This is helpful if some types of colorful design swirls, special effects or other images are being enhanced and manipulated within the casting as it cures.

If there are plans to repeat the casting of the same mold for multiple copies, a durable molding material should be selected that can withstand the repetition. Molds can be stored for a few years, if prepared properly, for future back-up, should the original be lost. If the mold appears to be weakening, a prototype can be cast and stored for future molds to be created from it.

The casting materials are so vast that the final finish of a part has many possibilities only limited by one's imagination. For example, a clear, glass-like part offers a very unusual display that can fit almost any decor.

Other casting materials, such as a silver, bronze, copper or gold, would naturally offer a special brilliance. A more permanent look of marble, alabaster, malachite, jade and other faux natural stone may be a good choice to complement a special room's decor.

For more suggestions, please feel free to contact us. You won't regret it.

DiAnna Tindell is a master restoration specialist and founder of Tindell's Restoration Schools in Nashville, TN. Inquiry for conservation or restoration resources and more details about this article, please visit the website: www.TindellsRestorationSchools.com. Send mail to: P.O. Box 292633, Nashville, TN 37229-2633.

cement.



Display of assorted mold types and casted parts.

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