

Matting and Framing Tips

info@oceanviewarts.com

Your *Mandala of Manifestation* print is an heirloom quality giclée print on heavy archival paper, signed with love and good vibes by the artist.

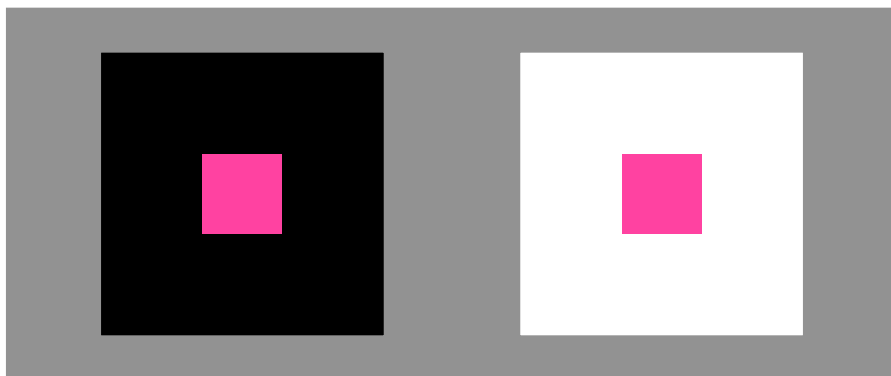
All artwork needs protection. Works on canvas are protected by a coating of varnish, therefore framing is optional for giclée prints and other artwork on gallery-wrapped canvas.

All artworks on paper (including photographs, drawings and watercolors) should be protected by a layer of glass and matted in order to prevent the work from touching the glass. If you have ever tried to peel an old, unmatted photo off the glass it was framed in, you already know why it is so important to create space between the image surface and the glass.

A mat is a thick paper board with an opening that allows the artwork to peek through without touching the glass. Matting by a professional is recommended. You may choose to have your print professionally framed as well as professionally matted; however, if you prefer to frame it yourself in a standard size frame, you can ask your professional mat cutter to cut the outside dimension of the mat to fit a standard size frame.

The mat is not only practical, it is also a decorative element. It should enhance the work on paper, and never detract from it. While many people—including some professional framers—believe that white or black mats are “neutral,” **they are not**. A white mat will upstage the light highlights in the artwork, making them look duller, and a black mat will compete with the dark accents, making them look washed out. A middle-value or tonal mat allows the darks and lights in the artwork to retain their luminosity and depth. A list of matboard colors that are complementary to this specific artwork is included.

Below is an example of the optical illusion that happens when using a white or black mat: both small squares of pink are the same color, but due to the contrast, the one surrounded by black appears lighter, and the one surrounded by white looks darker. Therefore a mat (as well as frame) in a medium tone is usually best because it does not have a sharp contrast with the artwork and supports rather than changes the appearance of the colors.



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An artist often signs their name on the white background just under the printed area of a fine art print. However, matting the image with the thin white edge showing all around creates the same kind of optical illusion shown in the illustration above—medium values will look darker than they really are. Also, the highlights will appear less vibrant in comparison to the white area. Therefore I sign my prints directly on the image and I purposefully trim the print to the edge of the image to ensure that the artwork will be matted to the best advantage.

The mat and frame should act as a bridge between the artwork and your environment. If your decor is primarily in neutral colors, you may want to choose tonal decorator colors for the mat and a frame similar to your wood colors. If your decor is black, white and chrome, you may want to select a neutral gray mat, and a burnished silver frame. If you have brighter colors in your environment, you can choose a brighter color for your mat, although the mat color should not be brighter than the colors in the artwork.

Double matting is a popular option done by layering one mat with a larger window on top of another. The top layer is the most visible, so a more subtle color usually works best. The bottom mat can be a less subtle color, since only a thin border of it will show.

How wide should the frame be? It should be quite a bit thinner than the mat, since the mat and the frame together form the visual framing of the image. Wider frames are typically used to frame paintings on canvas, which are not matted.

How wide should the mat be? A good rule of thumb is to use a 2-3" wide mat for small to medium artworks and a 4" or wider mat for larger artwork, although these measurements can vary widely due to presentation preference.

If you would like to fit your *Mandala of Manifestation* print into a standard frame, options include:

An 18" x 24" print can be matted with a 3" wide mat to fit in a standard 24" x 30" frame. It can also be matted with a 4" wide mat to fit in a standard 26" x 32" frame.

A 16" x 20" print can be matted with a 3" wide mat to fit in a standard 22" x 26" frame.

A 9" x 12" print can be matted with a mat that is 3.5" wide on the top and bottom and 4" wide on the sides to fit in a standard 16" x 20" frame.

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Choosing Matboard Colors

A color that works perfectly in a smaller mat may not look as good in a larger mat (and vice versa), even on the same image with the same colors! This is because a mat color can appear more or less intense depending on its square inch area. This is one of the reasons why having the expertise of a professional framer/mat cutter is useful.

Below are lists of selected groups of colors of Crescent brand matboard which may be compatible with your *Mandala of Manifestation* print. You may want to share this list with your professional mat cutter. However, this is only a representative list; other colors and brands may work as well.

Some of the colors of Standard Crescent brand matboard that are compatible with your *Mandala of Manifestation* print include:

Dusk (979)	Lapis (3326)	Wine (907)
Azure (1092)	Indigo (3358)	Maroon (1038)
Storm Blue (1067)	Williamsburg Blue (1047)	Las Cruces Purple (1076)
Marine Blue (1082)	Baltic Blue (1054)	
Volcano Blue (1081)	Delft blue (1053)	

These colors of Standard Crescent brand matboard are a little brighter or lighter, and may make good choices for the bottom mat of a double mat (in addition to those colors listed above):

Light Teal (1031)	Devonshire Blue (3307)	Grey Violet (1015)
Aqua Green (3357)	Champagne (4137)	
Biscay Blue (1073)	Concord (1016)	

Some of the colors of Crescent Select conservation matboard that are compatible with your *Mandala of Manifestation* print include:

Scrubs (9624)	Real Teal 9881)	Deep Blue (9889)
Royal Blue (9880)	Blue Moon (9625)	Mystic Blue (9828)
Inlet (9549)	Ink Spot (9627)	Grape Jelly (9562)
Water Fall (9897)	NYPD (9552)	Purple Mountain (9564)
Stormy Blue (9832)	Chicago Blues (9544)	Punch (9628)
Tealy Dan (9605)	Jeans (9885)	Plum (9840)
Brittany (9863)	Blue Monday (9542)	
Pharoah (9554)	Blue Night (9830)	

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Some of these colors of Crescent Select conservation matboard are a little brighter or lighter, and may make good choices for the bottom mat of a double mat (in addition to those colors listed above):

Aqua Green (9878)
Teal Teal (9891)

Purple Haze (9561)
Purple Iris (9879)

Geode (9558)

Some of the colors of Crescent RagMat museum quality matboard that are compatible with your *Mandala of Manifestation* print include:

Country Blue (1656)

Biscay Blue (1552)

Storm Blue (1551)

Williamsburg Blue (1578)

Lake (1429)

Aruba (1642)

Patriot Blue (1647)

Ink Blue (1431)

Amethyst (1639)

Purple Wildflower (1640)

These colors of Crescent RagMat museum quality matboard are a little brighter or lighter, and may make good choices for the bottom mat of a double mat (in addition to those colors listed above):

Calypso Blue (1513)

Periwinkle Blue (1624)

Have fun!
Love,
Meryl Ann
♥