

DESIGN ★ STAR 2017

GRAND REFLECTIONS

By Malia H. Bolt, MCPF

Mirrors have always been a favorite of mine to custom frame. You get to start from scratch; it's about the space where it will be displayed and the moulding design you'll create. Over the years, I have enjoyed creating unique mirror designs, from fitting challenging vanity and closet spaces, adding them to every type of room imaginable, to designing a fireplace with antiqued mirrors from the hearth all the way to the ceiling. There is no comparison between a ready-made mirror and a custom framed mirror specifically designed to fit the space perfectly.

The home in which the winning mirror was placed was one I had been to a few times before. It was in the process of being remodeled, and I had delivered several pieces for them. The first time I was in the home, I noticed the fireplace and its rock inlay design and immediately began to think about the possibilities of creating a mirror just for the inlay. The art piece they had there did not fit or add anything to the room. It was too heavy and disproportionate, covering up portions of the stone work. The room called out for a large mirror to reflect the beautiful wood ceiling and to highlight the arch shape in the stonework design. Having developed a relationship with the clients, I didn't hesitate to share my design idea when she asked me what I would do in place of the current artwork. I showed the two Larson-Juhl frames I'd envisioned, and right away, she said, "Okay, let's do it!"

Instead of just measuring the space, I thought the best and easiest thing would be to make a template of the inte-

rior space of the arch. For the exact size and shape, I marked each stone in the arch, top keystone, and even the spaces in between the rocks so I could more easily devise the hanging system to center the mirror once it was ready to install. That way, I was able to simply lay the template out on a table in our studio and line everything up with the surrounding stones and the key stone at the top. My plan was to have smaller framed mirrors mimic the pat-

tern of the square stones, creating an arch surrounding a larger mirror. The template also helped me visualize and determine the proportions of the smaller frames on the inside. The bottom sections were relatively fast and easy—all 45-degree angles. After completing that portion, I had to stop and think because a lot of math was involved.

As I approached the arch, each small mirror had to be cut differently with varying angles to fit just right within this unique shape. I cut all the angled frames and joined them—all except the frame for the very top mirror. I lined up all the smaller frames and put them together using a kreg jig. At this point, I hand measured, cut, and fit the smaller framed mirror at the top to coordinate with the key stone at the top of the stonework. I wanted the

larger mirror to be set back $\frac{1}{4}$ " farther than the smaller mirrors, so I used a circular saw and cut it $\frac{1}{2}$ " down and $\frac{1}{4}$ " deep along the inside of the joined frames, creating the rabbet for the larger interior mirror. I hand cut the arch in the mirror for the middle, then cut all the smaller mirrors.

Finally, it was ready to be assembled. The completed

**THE 2017
LARSON-JUHL DESIGN
STAR WINNER WAS
INSPIRED BY A GREAT
SETTING TO CREATE A
LARGE, MULTI-PANEL
MIRROR FRAME
PERFECT FOR AN
IMPRESSIVE STONE
CHIMNEY**

The room called out for a large mirror to reflect the beautiful wood ceiling and to highlight the arch shape in the stonework design.





As I approached the arch, each small mirror had to be cut differently with varying angles to fit just right within this unique shape. I cut all the angled frames and joined them—all except the frame for the very top mirror. I lined up all the smaller frames and put them together using a kreg jig.



The art piece they had there did not fit the room. It was disproportionate, covering up portions of the stone work. The room called out for a large mirror to reflect the beautiful wood ceiling and to highlight the arch shape in the stonework design.

size of the mirror came out to be approximately 30"x72". The revealing of the mirror was quite exciting, as my client had no idea what the final design was going to look like. She wanted it to be a surprise.

Beyond winning Design Star, which has been incredibly rewarding already, this mirror design has brought so much satisfaction to my client and me. It's been a lot of fun being able to share with her both the mirror and winning the competition. Every time we see each other, she tells me how proud they are of it and how her husband loves showing it off in their home.

I'm inspired by her positive experience to continue creating unique frame designs for my clients that will become timeless statement pieces for the home. **PFM**

Malia H. Bolt, MCPF, is the owner of Purple House Gallery in Gainesville, GA. Malia always had a love for art and design. After high school, she was accepted into the Center of Media Arts (CMA) program in South Miami, and later attended the School of Visual Arts (SVA) in New York City. She began working at Purple House Gallery in 1999, and became the owner in 2001. After that, Malia received her Certified Picture Framer (CPF) designation in 2004 and later became a Master Certified Picture Framer (MCPF) in 2008.

