

DESIGN STAR GRAND REFLECTIONS 2018

by Amy Young



● Using the interplay of light and water at the beach as inspiration, I designed a framed lantern to encase “Faded Horizon I” by Grace Popp. The completed project took home top honors at the 2018 Design Star framing competition, hosted by Larson-Juhl.

As soon as I heard about the Design Star competition’s new spin, inspired by one of my family’s favorite shows, “Chopped,” I was poised to enter. With the new format, all the contestants chose from the same group of materials to work with, so I knew I had to really think outside of the box.

I consider myself an experienced framer. You could even say it runs in my genes. My mother started working at a framing store when I was sixteen, and shortly after, I found myself working right alongside her. What started as a side job after college eventually developed into my own business, and over the years, I’ve discovered the joy of creating original designs with customers.

Larson-Juhl’s Design Star: Chopped Edition was the perfect opportunity to flex my skills and creativity. Though I have to admit, I spun my wheels for much of the entry period as I brainstormed a concept. My first



● After building the lantern frame (left), I completed the piece by adding string lights to the center of the shade (right).



● In addition to the first-place award, “Lantern by the Sea” also won Best Use of Moulding in the competition.



● The black and gray mouldings used for the lantern frame were chosen to complement the cool tones of the artwork.

thought was to steer away from a traditional framed piece. That’s when I found inspiration from the print selected for us to use, “Faded Horizon I” by Grace Popp. With its inky blue tones and fluid brushstrokes, my ideas shifted to waterscapes.

I love the beach. I thought about light, the way the sunlight hits the water, and even the way the light casts the water on a cloudy day. This sparked the idea to create a framed lantern that utilized the print as a cylindrical shade, illuminated from within. The Lancaster collection of mouldings from Larson-Juhl has a slightly distressed finish that evokes the natural patina of beached wood, so it was the perfect fit for my concept.

After studying the cool tones in the painting, I knew I wanted to use both the black and the gray mouldings. Two mouldings, with two different profiles would give the lantern’s case added visual interest and create contrast between the hardwood and paper. I chose to use mat-board in “Ink” to play up this effect as well. Together, the complementary styles utilized in a unique application earned Best Use of Moulding.

The final touches to the piece included securing a small handle at the top and a string of lights within the center of the shade. When lit, “Lantern By Sea” creates instant ambience, and I’m so thrilled with the result. It’s the perfect accessory for a porch or outdoor living area, though today, I have the lantern displayed on an accent table in my store, The Frame Shoppe, alongside my Design Star certificate.

Being creative is a job perk. Being honored for that creativity is not only amazing, it is extremely validating. The range of creativity on display at The West Coast Art & Frame Expo was incredible, and that’s why I was so shocked when I not only won Best Use of Moulding, but then earned top honors as the 2018 Design Star. I’m honored to work in an industry that allows us all to tap into our creativity on a daily basis. **PFM**



Amy Young

Amy is the owner of The Frame Shoppe, located in Cincinnati, OH. After graduating from The University of Cincinnati, Amy decided to join her parents’ venture in opening The Frame Shoppe. Today, The Frame Shoppe remains family-owned and operated. Amy purchased the store from her parents in 2006, and over the last decade she’s remained devoted to growing the business and serving her customers.