

*Title: Mounting and framing Jazz*

*Duration: 05:03*

*Transcript*

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This talk takes you through the technical challenges and ethical questions raised in mounting and framing 20 iconic plates from Matisse's 1947 artist book *Jazz*. We're currently preparing this for the upcoming exhibition *A Taste of Impressionism* at the Royal Scottish Academy.

The National Galleries of Scotland's copy of *Jazz* exists in the original loose leaf folio state which includes the postmark plates, pages of text and a slip case. It resides in its book form in the archive store. The request to separate the plates from the text block raised initial concerns over whether the intervention would compromise the artist's original intention. Through internal discussions and a survey of how other collecting institutions have approached this object we were able to work through the ethical questions raised by the proposed display.

We looked at other organisations that had exhibited the plates framed and this helped us to confirm certain parameters. We would float mount the plates to keep the edges of the pages exposed as a reminder they are part of a larger book and standard white frames would both fit the rest of the contemporary collection and also follow the examples of previous displays. From this, we also confirmed that we wished to be able to return the plates to the rest of the book so that the object can be interpreted in its integrity and that it was important we implement a numbering protocol to catalogue all the component parts.

We retained the three-dimensional quality of the central fold through each plate to keep the book look. We discussed non-interventive mounting solutions such as using magnets or melanic strips but these were deemed both aesthetically distracting and potentially unreliable long-term. The plates had to be mounted in such a way that they could be packed, stored, framed and reinstalled safely. V-hinges and wheat starch paste would be preferable aesthetically but it was not ideal to be reapplying and removing hinges depending on future display requests. With this in mind we came up with an eyelet hinge solution of mounting. We'd adhere Japanese paper eyelets to each plate with wheat starch paste through which we could loop the paper tape straps. These straps can be adhered to the mountboard for display and later cut and released. The eyelets could remain on the object as unobtrusive patches, allowing the new work to be returned to book format. New paper tape straps can be made and looped through the eyelets again if framing was requested later.

We made multiple versions of the eyelet hinge, trying different shapes, sizes and orientations to test structure and strength and here you can see some examples of our different tests. We slotted paper straps through and released them several times to test wear and tear of each eyelet. Ultimately we settled for the hinge shown in the top right of this slide, a slightly heavier paper folded cross fibre and slit along one edge. We pasted four hinges to test sheets of similarly weighted paper, which we slot hinged to a piece of mountboard and left standing vertically for a period to confirm the sheet

would not move or the eyelet stretch or tear. Again, we released and remounted these a number of times to get feel for the process and check for wear and tear.

Each of the plates comfortably fit one of our standard mount sizes. We laid several pages down and found they rested consistently on the same area, which was four hinging points set into the work. These allowed the pages to hold firmly yet retain their book-like page structure. We created a template to help us uniformly cut 16 boards with slots and hinge each plate to consistent measurements. Four of the plates have text pages printed on the verso. These require hinges made to half the size and to be hinged to different measurements from the rest of the book to avoid the text, so for these we cut the spoke slotted mount boards.

When pasting, we fashioned Melinex applicators onto which we could slide the eyelet to paste three edges. Once this was pasted in place we slipped a piece of Reemay through the loop and removed the Melinex applicator. In this way the Reemay prevents the hoop being stuck down with the rest of the hinge during pressing. Adhering the eyelets was a lengthy process due to the number of works, scale of each and drying time required. After all eyelets were pasted we cut 80 long straps of acid-free gummed paper tape which we pre-folded so that once threaded through the eyelets it could easily be adhered back onto itself. We attached the strap to every eyelet. We threaded the long straps through the pre-cut mountboards taking care to leave a little slack to allow the object to settle naturally. We wetted the gum tape and adhered them to the back and here you can see the 18th plate, *Lagoon*, finally mounted and retaining its natural folded structure.

It was decided for both economic and sustainability reasons we would construct and finish the frames in-house. We made them to one of our standard sizes to join our suite of contemporary stock frames so if and when the plates are requested to return to book format these frames can house other works from the NGS Print Room. Here I am having a sneak peek at one of the plates finally framed. I hope you're all able to enjoy viewing the full set on display at the Royal Scottish Academy this summer. Thanks very much.

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