

Preservation Mounting for Ceramic Tile

QUESTION:

A customer has brought in a very attractive ceramic tile. She is leaving the design up to us but she would like to have it preservation mounted. Any suggestions?

ANSWER:

Tiles that are not too thick can be mounted using a plate hanger or multipurpose acrylic hangers. A sink mat is another preservation method. A sink mat is made by placing the tile on the mounting board and securing strips of board around it to the height of the tile. A window mat with an opening slightly smaller than the size of the tile is then placed on top. The strips of board will keep the tile from moving around and the smaller window opening will keep the tile from falling forward.

For large or very heavy tiles the mounting board should be sturdy enough to support the weight. If the tile is floated and a plate hanger or multipurpose acrylic hangers will not work, there is a compromise between preservation and non-preservation mounting you can try. Hugh Phibbs from the National Gallery makes the following suggestion: Obtain good quality small plastic tubing and cut it into two or more pieces slightly shorter than the width of the tile. Attach the tubing with silicone glue across the back of the tile. The number of pieces of tubing you will need depends on the size and weight of the tile. Once the glue has dried, run a polyester monofilament line through each piece of tubing, and then through the mounting board, using something (such as a button) to tie off the line on the backside of the mounting board so the knot does not pull back through the hole. If the tile ever needs to be removed from the backing, all you have to do is cut the line.

These questions and answers are compiled by PPFA Technical Coordinator Diane Day, CPF, from HelpLine questions.

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