

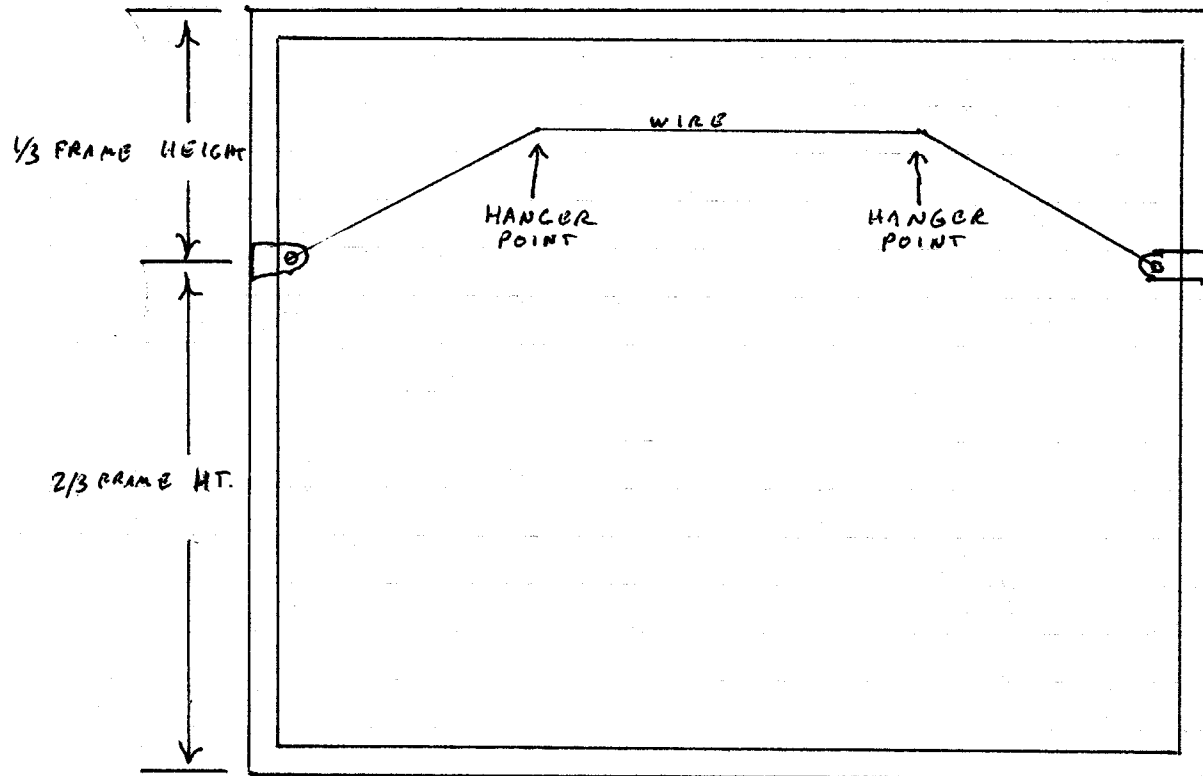
# FRAMING AND HANGING FOR EXHIBITION

by Marc Wollman (for CoPA presentation,) February 2007

## FIGURE 1

1. Anchors for hanging wire should be placed about  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the frame height from the top of the frame. This helps keep the work level. (See #3.) For metal frames, use hangers that come with the hardware kit (or see #4 below.) For wood frames, use ring hangers screwed into the frame.
2. Picture framing wire is the only kind that should be used. This can be stranded galvanized, stranded stainless steel, or plastic jacketed. The wire should be rated for the weight of the piece. For example, 30-pound wire should be used for pieces weighing less than that weight. However, it is not helpful to use, for example, 75-pound wire on a relatively light piece.
3. Note from the figure that the hanging wire should be SLACK, not taut. This makes it possible to use two picture hangers, with the wire hanging downward toward the sides of the frame. This helps keep the work hanging level. Also, from the standpoint of the exhibition installer, taut wires allow no room for fingers to hook the wire on the hangers.
4. For metal frames only, an alternative to wiring for hanging is a sawtooth device which clips into the frame. Eye Level Framing will make these available to CoPA members.
5. For heavier wood framed pieces, ring hangers can hook into wall hangers directly, rather than wiring the frame.

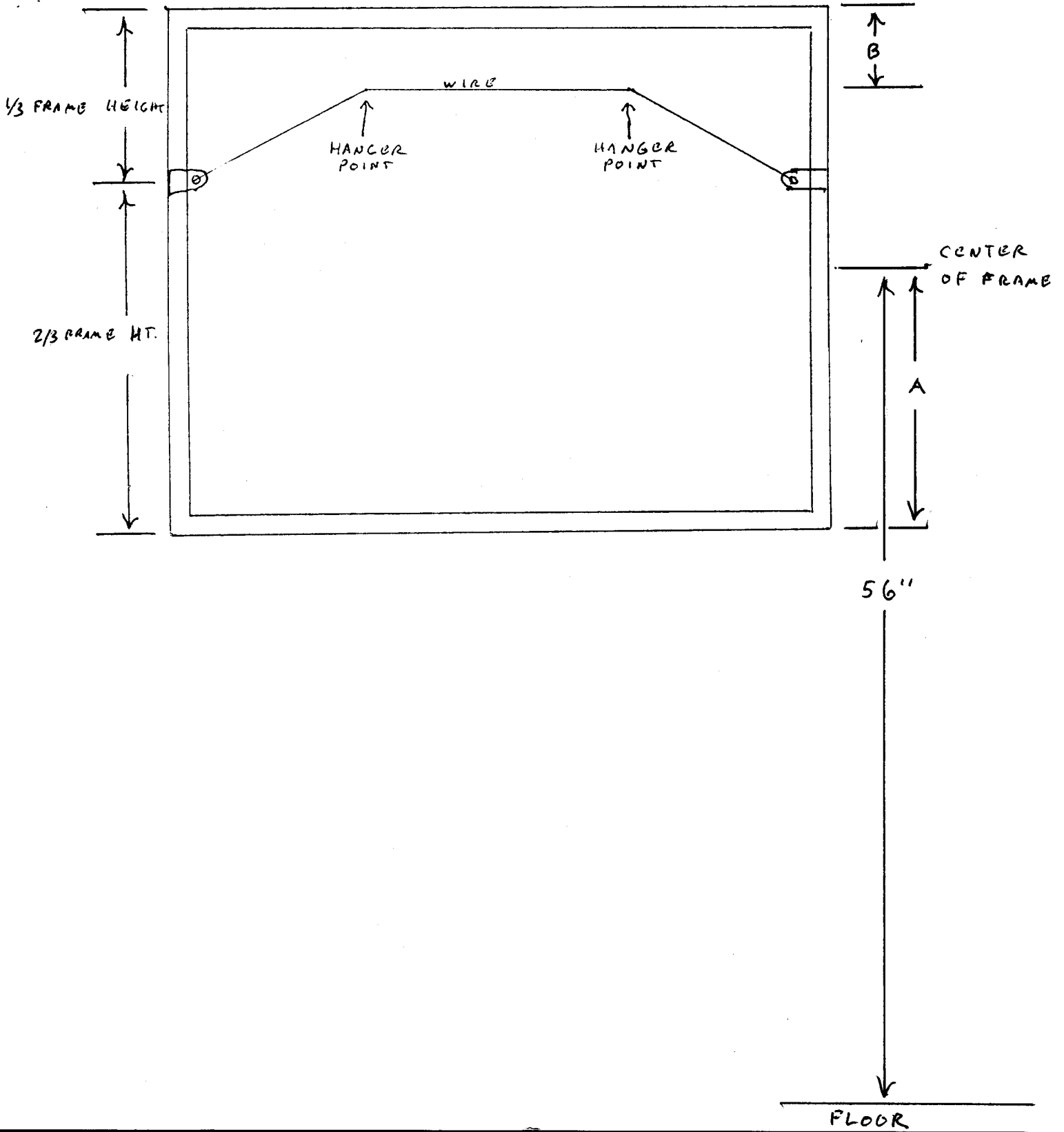
FIGURE 1



## FIGURE 2

1. Typical museum installation places the center of the work at 56 inches from the floor, which is approximately a normal eye level.
2. To help hang works at this height (or any height, for that matter) several measurements need to be made on the back of the piece. Measure in  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{3}$  the width of the piece from each side (for example, 6 inches for a 16x20.) Then, taking the wire up at those points, measure the distance between the wire (as though it were on wall hangers) and the top of the frame.
3. Mark where you want to place the edge of the frame on the wall (with tape, etc.) Measure in whatever distance you chose in step #2 (let's use our 6 inches) and also mark the distance between the two horizontal measurements from step #2 (that would be 8 inches for our 16x20.)
4. On one of the marks you made for the hanger, measure up from the floor:  
56 inches plus  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  the height of the frame (distance A) minus  
Distance between the wire and the top of the frame (distance B.)  
(To use our 16x20 example as shown, that would be  $56+8-2.5=61.5$  inches.)  
Mark that height for ONE of your horizontal hanger marks. That is the height of the bottom of the hanger hook.
5. Install the first hanger. Place a level at the bottom of the first hanger, and level it. Center the second hanger on the other horizontal mark you made for hangers, with the bottom of the hanger hook resting on the level, and nail the hanger in place.
6. Install the piece on the hangers, and check the piece for level. Adjust as needed, and you're done.
7. This is actually much easier to do than to read!

FIGURE 2



## **MATTING AND FRAMING**

Appearance of mats and frames is an aesthetic decision, to be made in conjunction with the appearance of the piece to be framed, and where it will be installed (to tie in with decorating, etc.)

However, for gallery or museum installation, the simpler the better. Use of a simple, neutral white mat with a simple and unobtrusive frame helps the viewer to focus on the image (instead of the mat and/or frame.)

In all cases, archival materials should be used, to minimize degradation of the image. The best mounting for archival purposes is a hinge mount made from acid-free linen tape. (For museum standards, this is reversible.) However, dry mounting using archival dry mount materials is also quite acceptable (and in the case of fiber-base silver-gelatin prints, almost a necessity.) Also, for installations with high level of daylight or fluorescent lighting, glass or acrylic glazing which filters UV light should be used.

## **LIGHTING FOR EXHIBITION**

For preservation purposes, typical museum lighting standards for works on paper allows lighting not to exceed 15 footcandles (measured at the piece.) Most non-museum settings have lighting at a higher level, but this is less than ideal for preservation of the image. Incandescent lighting is significantly less harmful than fluorescent or HID lighting, or daylight.

At greatest risk of degradation are older type C prints, or silver-gelatin prints not archivally processed. At less risk are archivally-processed silver-gelatin prints, contemporary type C prints, dye-transfer prints, and giclee prints which are made with inks or dyes specifically designed for photographic imaging.