

# Ceiling the Deal

Artist Terri Meyer shows that dreams really can come true.

After working and traveling for a decade with the Air Force as a meteorologist, TERRI MEYER, owner of The Creative Chateau, gave in to a moment of bold passion—she packed everything up and returned to her childhood home of Ashland, Ohio, to pursue her lifelong dream of becoming an artist. Since 1999, Terri's business, originally named A Passion for the Brush Studio, has seen many changes. Freelance commissions, ad layouts and tapestry designs done out of her home evolved into production of limited-edition prints and greeting cards of her own work out of a full art production studio. In addition, Terri expanded her skills into the area of interior design and embellishment, doing everything from small canvas paintings to large ceiling and wall murals, trompe l'oeil effects and faux finishes.



## What inspires your designs?

Books, magazines, places, nature and other people's work. A renovated casino in Las Vegas inspired my first faux-technique attempt. The inspiration for my first ceiling came from a book—the ceilings were so amazing that I wanted to challenge myself to try one. A stencil inspired my master bedroom vaulted skylight, and the ideas for the adjoining bathroom came from the work of the old master François Boucher.

## What tool can't you live without?

A computer with a design program such as Adobe Photoshop. I use it to work out my designs. I can digitally photograph a room, load the images onto the computer and superimpose a mural, faux technique or other creative element on the photo to see what the final result will look like.

## What advice do you have for do-it-yourselfers?

Artistic touches add originality to your home, so follow your instincts, experiment, have fun and go beyond the expected. Be willing to create a home that reflects your unique personality. Don't be afraid to try out a new technique! The results could amaze you.

## What is your artistic pet peeve?

Making sure the initial design is drawn out properly—checking for the correct alignment, proportion and perspective. The initial drawing is like a skeleton—if the bones are wrong, the final result will reflect those flaws. For a quick check, look at the design's reflection in a mirror—mistakes will stand out in the reflected image.

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## strokes of genius

### Terri's Faux Vaulted Windows

#### PREPARE WALLS

1. Prepare walls by smoothing out any imperfections with spackling compound, sanding and coating with a stain-proof sealer if necessary. Base-coat the area with satin-finish latex paint in your background color. *Note: Oil-primed walls must be coated with a sealer before using acrylic paint.*

#### TRANSFER DESIGN

1. Purchase a ready-made design such as a stencil (this treatment was inspired by the layered Quatrafoil Window & Grill stencil by L.A. Stencilworks). Use a level and tape measure to ensure design is centered and even. (If the stencil isn't large enough to fit your surface, enlarge it by transferring it to a grid on kraft paper that fits your wall area, then transfer enlarged image with graphite paper. Or, project the image onto the wall and trace its shadow with a pencil.)

2. If you're using a stencil, tape it to the wall (add the wrought-iron detail after you paint the frame) and trace the image with pencil.

#### PAINTING

1. Paint the window "glass" first. Mix dabs of cerulean blue acrylic paint into white latex paint until you have the desired sky color. Apply with artist brush inside the window frame. Let dry to touch.

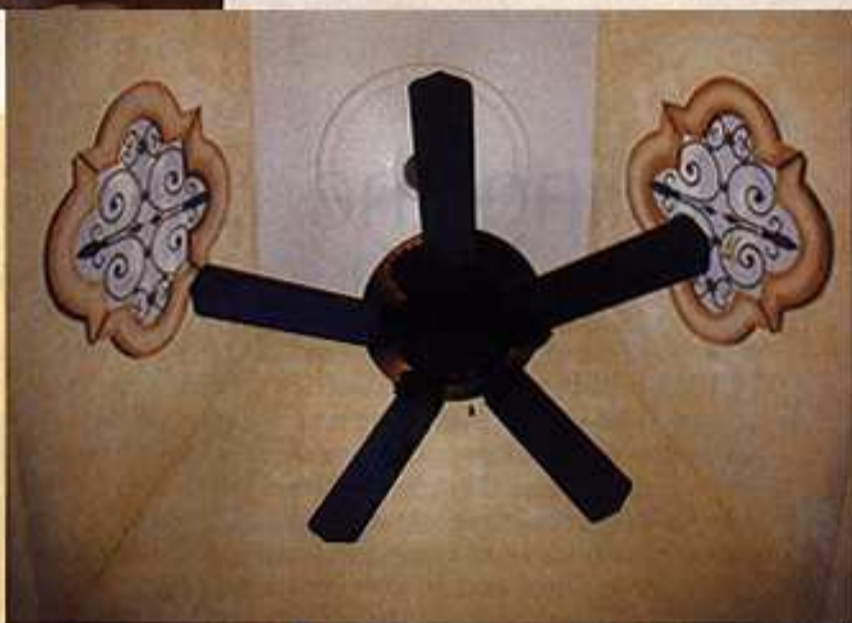
2. Add clouds by dipping brush in white latex paint, blot until almost dry and apply in circular motions. Highlight cloud tops with white acrylic paint.

3. Mix small amounts of yellow ochre, burnt umber and white acrylic paint until you get the desired beige color. Paint the drawn window frame.

4. With a mix of burnt umber and a little yellow ochre, paint in the shadowy areas of the window frame. Create a rounded effect by adding this paint to edges of the window frame. Blend the edges toward the center of the frame with a small sea sponge, leaving the center a lighter beige. Let dry.

5. Place the wrought-iron stencil, or altered design, over the original image. Trace with pencil. Fill in outline with black acrylic paint, then highlight small areas with white acrylic paint.

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TEXT: Victoria Arnett



### Terri's Insider Tips

- Mix paint and glazes in empty coffee cans with lids. Label the can with the contents and date—I usually keep mine up to three years.
- If you're a renter and can't paint the walls, paint treatments on heavy paper or primed canvas and adhere them to the wall using wallpaper paste.



Faux windows draw attention skyward and lend architectural importance to a vaulted ceiling.