

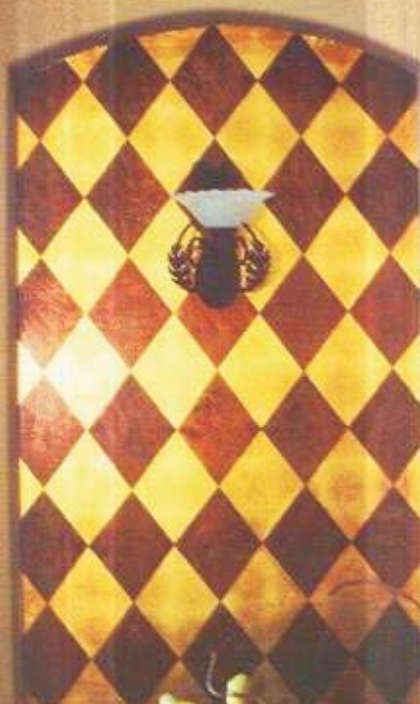
Emerald Coast Home Design Magazine Show airs Wednesdays, see page 3 for details

# EMERALD COAST HOME DESIGN



1920s Style  
Mediterranean  
Revival in North Hill

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With banded Italian reed-molding, Robert Kersey created the dome of the central rotunda that features an eight-foot Venetian Neptune fresco aged with a faux crack painted along it, making it look like a genuine survivor of Pompeii.



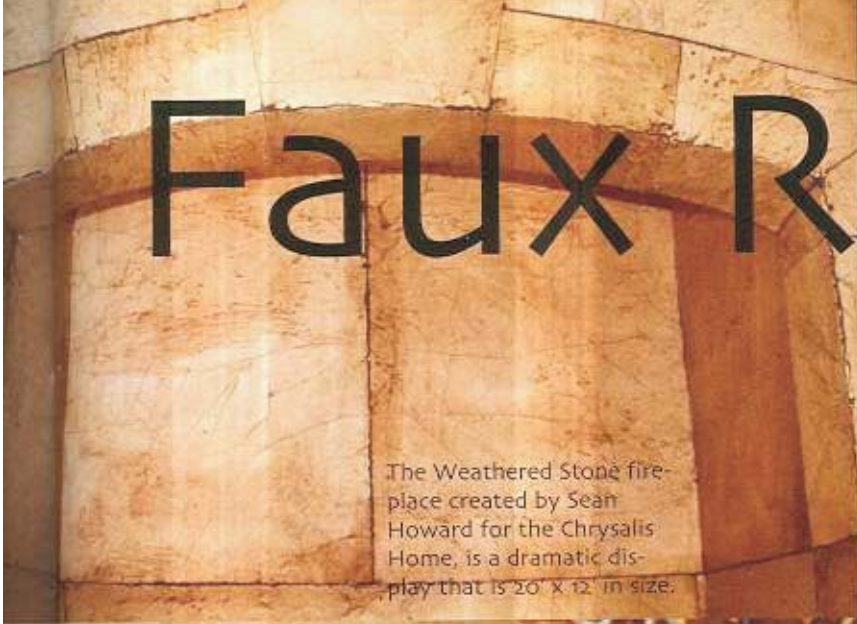
Weathered Stone comes in sheets, each of which is layered with a palpable stone feel. Starting with a secret base mixture, which gives the product the cracking found in aged natural stone, Sean Howard then hand applies multiple colors and sealers.



The third floor balcony, which creates the circular frame of the rotunda, is girded by a faux verde bronze railing, completely leafed in gold by Robert Kersey.



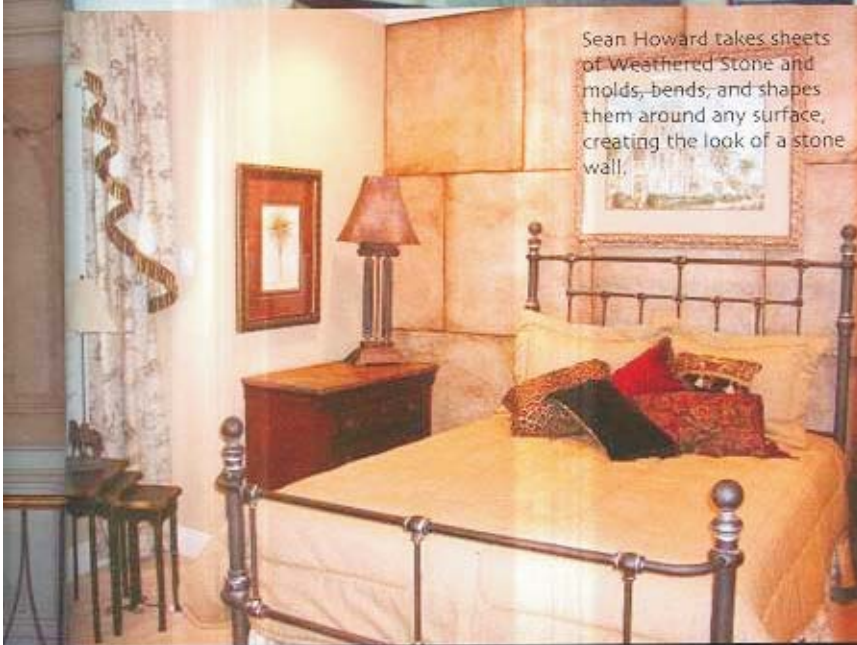
# Faux Realism



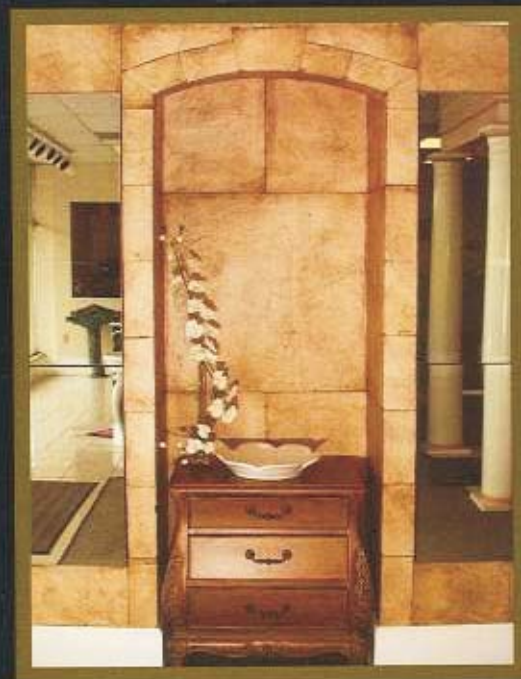
The Weathered Stone fireplace created by Sean Howard for the Chrysalis Home, is a dramatic display that is 26' x 12' in size.



Robert Kersey hid a door by a stunning marbleization that runs right through the arch, so as if the door looks like it's part of the wall. The eye is drawn to the arch, and the door becomes a secret.



Sean Howard takes sheets of Weathered Stone and molds, bends, and shapes them around any surface, creating the look of a stone wall.



BY DYLAN O'LEARY

The faux finishing genre no longer exists simply as a form of replication; while once a faux finish on a wall or a chair was the end-product of the art — the reason for creating faux — 21st century faux integrates a variety of mixed media, papers, latex emollients, and antiquity designs to create new things.

Faux is no longer an attempt to facsimilate something old or something else; it is an *ars gratia*, creating its own potentials. Faux has arrived, and to pun on the term "fake it 'til you make it," faux has made it. The very term faux finishing is seldom used unmodified by artists in the industry, as you'll see in this interview with state-of-the-art craftsmen, Sean Howard and Robert Kersey.

"After years of traveling around the country, I decided it was time to create a new line in wall covering," said Howard. Armed with experience and thrift, he invented Weathered Stone, which, for all purposes, looks like stone but applies like wallpaper.

"The virtue of Weathered Stone is how it gains texture — realness — as it is applied and as it finds curves, corners, and arcs on the surface applied to it," Howard said.

An



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Weathered Stone comes in sheets, each of which is layered with a palpable stone feel. Starting with a secret base mixture, which gives the product the cracking found in aged natural stone, Howard then hand applies multiple colors and sealers.

"The result is sheets of stone that can be molded, bent, and shaped around any surface, creating the look of a stone wall," Howard said. "The sheets are installed with the seams butted together and the mortar is added after installation, creating the look of real stone."

Howard has created 30 standard colors, though an infinite range of colors can be made:

"One client called up and said 'Our color is Benjamin Moore 1500 and I love silver.' Bam — we had the exact color tone and I added a silver sheen to the look. She loved it," said Howard.

Weathered Stone can be installed by any one with wallpaper experience, and certainly by a professional. Plus, it's extremely forgiving. You can hammer it, pound it, bend it, tear it and mold it into shape. The crackling that results creates texture and, wherever you want, it can be filled with mortar.

"Also, you don't have to have a perfect, flat wall, like with wallpaper. You can put it right on paneling. We can even put it on cinder block with just a skim coat of sculptor's mud. If it you chip it, easy: it can either be filled in with the same tone mortar. If it's major damage, we can replace the one panel and pop on another," Howard said.

Weathered Stone is not Howard's only craft, of course. If there's a surface, he can glorify it with wallpaper,



Designer Ginger Kelly incorporated Weathered Stone into the decor of the dining room as a wanes coating under the chair rail.

enlarged posters, and prints of family photos.

"We were flattered to have been selected as a contributor for The Southern Living Idea House in Brenthaven, Tennessee," Howard said. Designer Ginger Kelly incorporated Weathered Stone into the decor of the dining room as a wanes coating under the chair rail for the house.

Yet, one of Howard's finest pieces in the area is a Weathered Stone accomplishment. It is the fireplace at the model home in Chrysalis Homes, Gulf Shores, Alabama.

To give you an example of how easy Weathered Stone is used, Howard installed the Chrysalis fireplace, which is about 20 by 12 feet in size in one day while training two people how to do it.

*(continued on page 33).*

*(Faux Finishes, continued from page 14).*

Howard is also offering a variation of Weathered Stone as a counter top covering. The product has an extra coating for durability and installs using a vinyl over vinyl wallcovering adhesive. This new type of Weathered Stone can be installed directly over existing Formica and has the same durability as a hard wood flooring product. This is an extremely cost effective way to remodel a kitchen or bath but more importantly it is beautiful.

Call Sean Howard at 251-990-3030 or toll free 877-350-3584. Check out his artwork at [www.seanhoward.com](http://www.seanhoward.com).

The C. Findley McCrae home near Rosemary Beach is a 15,000 square-foot monument to Robert Kersey's magic in the faux arts. With banded Italian reed-molding, the dome of the central rotunda features an eight-foot Venetian Neptune fresco aged with a faux crack painted along it, making it look like a genuine survivor of Pompeii.

"It's absolutely beautiful," said Augusta Granger, McCrae's secretary. "The McCraes were ecstatic about it. It was some kind of beautiful. The full three stories looks like it's a large canvas painting."

But that isn't enough: The third floor balcony, which creates the circular frame of the rotunda, is girded by a faux verde bronze railing, completely leafed in gold.

With 22 years in the decoration business, Kersey's faux phantasms have a strong foundation in working with the classics.

"I worked in antiques for a long time, so I know what items should look like," Kersey said. "That's the kind of detail people get when they hire me to do their best work."

But there's more at the McCrae house. Another wonderful wall piece by Kersey folds around a corner, a vista of a planted pot frescoed along a hallway, continuing as the wall turns further down the hall.

Elsewhere, a door is hidden by a stunning faux marbling that runs right across the door, as if the door looks like a painting on the wall. The eye is tricked and the door becomes a secret.

"On that piece, one of the techniques that makes it work so well is the final finishing," Kersey said. "What we do with works like that is sand it down afterwards, leveling off the tips and high points of the plaster. Then we apply the aging solution."

Metal is also a friend to Kersey. In the Centex Model Home in Destin, he's created a bronze and gold leaf a harlequin (diamond-pattern) panel in a dining room that sings of the Renaissance.

To see more of Robert Kersey's wonders, call him at 850-650-0021 or view his website at [www.kerseyandcompany.com](http://www.kerseyandcompany.com)

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