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Fishers bride Sarah Gore
was married in August 2007.



STORY BY LORI DARVAS
PHOTOS BY PERRY REICHANADTER

CALL IT ART. Call it design. But don't say faux when you're describing the interior of Towana and David Cranor's Hamilton Proper home. Sure, the columns in the kitchen aren't really made of brick, and the distressed red front door only looks like it's been around for years and years. But to call it a faux finish would be a faux pas.

Towana's a fan of texture and design, and the couple enlisted Indianapolis-based Blice Edwards Studios to create a showcase of murals, paintings and unique finishes in their sprawling two-story home. The artistic surfaces provide an elegant backdrop for the couple's Spanish-style furnishings and art collection gleaned from their travels around the world. But they're more than just a palette; they're stand-alone art as well.

"Their work is more art, not faux painting," Towana says. ➤➤

Homeshow

Textures and tones take center stage

The ceiling of the master bedroom features painted panels.





The hearth room opens onto the kitchen. The stools provide seating at the two-tier island.

David and Towana Cranor pose in front of a wall of family photos.

Christopher Blice, who partners with Jon Edwards to create the trademark designs, heartily concurs.

"We call ourselves decorative artists, decorative painters," Blice says. "We don't like the word faux."

Towana happened upon the home while attending the 2005 Home-A-Rama (the home next door was part of the tour). They were back in the area after a few years in Florida. The couple, parents to three older daughters and an 8-year-old son, liked the idea of golf-course living. With its peaked roof and stone front, the home brought its own character to the neighborhood. The couple liked the open floor plan, with its wood floors and the walls of windows.

"Since it had not been finished yet, I was able to make a few changes," says Towana, a marriage and family therapist. "Then with a little paint and style, I could make it into what I wanted it to be."

Start with the spacious kitchen. Towana admits she's not a cook, but the kitchen is a culinary showcase with its gold tone granite countertops and stainless steel appliances. Old World cabinetry, by Doug Dye of Dye Woodworks, adds a timeless appeal, with warm pecan around the perimeter and a distressed cream on the center island. The island itself is split into two sections — a granite-covered work space below and a gracefully curved eating area above.

"People like the two tiers," Dye says. "It helps hide appliances, sinks or cook tops, and it gives them an opportunity to have taller stools at the other end."

Soft golden walls were the logical color choice for the inviting kitchen and hearth-room area. The pedestals, however, are the crowning touch and create an Old World air. They look like natural stone and mortar. Touch them, and you'll even feel the texture. But the surface is manmade, artfully designed to rival its stone counterpart. A bonding plaster provides the texture, and a glaze ensures it maintains its looks.

"It's not drywall mud," Blice explains. "If you hit it, it's not going to chip off. It's very, very durable."

Blice and Edwards worked their optical magic in the adjoining hearth room as well. Originally, the stone fireplace was small. Towana wanted something more majestic, and considered commissioning a new one. Instead, the design team built a wooden frame above the mantel and painted it to match the stone below.

The 10,000-square-foot home is filled with pieces the couple brought back from Florida, their red and gold hues taking on new character in the Indiana sun. Animal prints are a favorite, with spotted bar stools in the kitchen, a zebra-striped rug in the hearth room and a leopard cover over the lower-level pool table.

Interior designer Debra Smith helped Towana place her furnishings and art. The pieces of art tell their own story, whether they're framed family photos, a 150-year-old tapestry from a Paris flea market in the formal living or a colorful antique floral oil painting over the fireplace. A 10-foot-by-10-foot tapestry hangs in the spacious entryway, a Renaissance-style photo of Towana's daughters painted by artist Pamuela Mougin. ➔



The formal dining room mural depicts a day in the European countryside.

The dining room walls depict a day in the life of a European countryside. One end of the room shows the countryside at sunrise, changing as it flows along the walls, ending in a nighttime setting. The artwork has a textured, aged effect.

The master bedroom received its own special touch. The cream and white bedding dictated the room's ceiling designs, painted canvas panels that replicate the bedding and add depth and texture to the ceiling.

"We call the ceiling the fifth wall," Blice says. "Everybody always forgets about the ceiling."

While not every artistic touch is done on a grand scale, each one brings something to the home, making the whole greater than the proverbial sum of its parts. The laundry room, for instance, could have remained unadorned and tucked out of sight, a haven for laundry work in progress and a feeding area for the family's two short-haired exotic Persian cats, Pearl and Snuggles. But it's been dressed up, its walls accented with a painted flowing ribbon design. The laundry room island cabinets have been outfitted with red glass knobs, and similar glass pieces punctuate the wall's ribbon design.

The lower level is a comfortable family area, with a television viewing area, built-in bar and pool table. An adjacent movie room is a sweet spot for viewing movies on the big screen. Down the hallway, Towana has decorated a cozy guest suite for her own parents when they visit.

It's a nice place to call home. ✦



The lower-level TV room.