

Trompe l'oeil - "to fool the eye"

is the art of specialty decorative painting depicting real or fantasy settings to create the illusion of three-dimension. It is truly an art of deception.

What You Can Expect When

PLANNING AND COMMISSIONING A TROMPE L'OEIL PAINTING OR MURAL

Hopefully you will find this information helpful if you are considering a trompe l'oeil painting or mural commission for your individual environment. There will be many questions and hopefully this will help you to understand the process. Please keep in mind that every project is different.

Consultation - The first meeting is a review of the artist's work and discussion of the overall objectives. Depending on the location, this may be a free consultation. If you have specific ideas or reference photos, this is most helpful to the artist to understand your project desires. At this time, measuring and analyzing of the location and surface of the project is needed.

Estimate and Contract - You will receive a detailed (plain English) estimate describing the scope of the work that will be executed, timeline and charges. The contract includes details of the project, deposit/payment schedule, and a full written agreement between you and the artist. You should also be aware that because every project is unique, an estimate is exactly that - an estimate. There is no exact science for creating a "to the penny" estimate or forecasting the exact amount of time a project will take.

Pricing - This can be very subjective depending on the following elements of each project. First considered is the concept, composition and surface conditions. Next, the size and location - meaning wall height, ceilings, floors, small or angled areas, outdoor, etc. During this time is also factored the use of ladders and/or scaffolding. Then the construction element which involves any wall/surface repair and preparation. In the case of transportable panels, it is the construction of the panels themselves. Supplies are per project including primers, paints and brushes, tape, cleanup materials and possible building supplies. Travel is also another billable/negotiable element. The artist should combine *all* these elements when properly estimating a project.

Development (Phase One) - Initial concepts are sketched or computer-generated from photos or ideas supplied by the client or are completely created by the artist. This stage is considered the "guts" of the project. It involves the composition and almost all visual elements of the mural or decorative painting.

Painting (Phase Two) - The fun part. If on-site, seeing a work of art develop is a wonderful experience. Especially when it is for you. We use environmentally safe, almost all water-based products. When working on-site, the artist needs full cooperation for privacy, so not to be disturbed and to stay on schedule, and have close access to warm running water and restroom facilities. Commissioning an off-site transportable mural on canvas or panels, on the other hand, avoids disruption to the

artist, as well as your home or business. This type of mural or painting has become very popular because it is cost-effective. In contrast, it takes considerably more time to complete an on-site project because of the daily travel and daily cleanup, that is all billable. Keep in mind that the artist is able to work undisturbed when not being on-site and the project can be completed faster. A transportable mural on canvas or panels will require delivery and professional attaching. Another important factor to be considered in a commission would be if you should ever decide to move. Remember, this is a work of art for *you*. Otherwise, if painted directly onto the surface, it becomes the next home or building owner's to enjoy.

In conclusion, trompe l'oeil decorative painting is very different from "fine art". The artist does not simply sit down at an easel and paint. The process is in-depth and physical. It is very personal because it blends the client and their own environment. Comparing a work of fine art from a gallery to a trompe l'oeil work, is like night and day. It is not fair to artists to compare a 20"x 24" framed oil to a 10' x 15' dining room wall, when each is so different. All potential clients need to understand the elements and the entire process that validate the costs for this type of commission.

While a gallery piece "hangs on a wall", trompe l'oeil "transforms the wall". Remember that you are commissioning an original work of art. This is an endeavor and investment you should cherish for a very, very long time.

Hope this informational overview helps with your decisions and direction.