

Architectural Detail Defines Built Space

by Roy Yardley

Architectural detail defines built space. It is a language to itself, and like any language, continues to evolve along with the culture surrounding it. Architectural detail calls attention to space, line and mass. Examples of this might be a cornice which makes the transition between a ceiling and wall graceful, a ceiling rosette which frames a light fixture, ceiling coffered beams or columns and pediment which are used to separate open areas.

Today, these architectural details are a useful tool to personalize large areas with blank walls which are often the result of modern building trends. Details may be used to add warmth to a room by having the effect of lowering a cavernous ceiling or conversely raising a low ceiling. The details interact in an interesting way with light and shadow, ever-changing throughout the day.

Your local big-box store will stock many moldings manufactured out of various materials from wood to polyurethane but none will give the variety in size, design and options that are available from manufacturers of plaster moldings. Not only can the finished quality be excellent but customization is also readily available. The importance of correct proportions in your selection of moldings cannot be overstated.

Plaster moldings are ‘the real thing’, add value to the home, does not shrink and in the unfortunate case of a fire, contribute zero smoke and fire. What else can make that claim?

Plaster can be painted, made to look like real wood, marbled or even gilded to transform the molding into a work of art.

Many people may think that the age-old trade of making and installing quality plaster moldings is a long-lost art. One notable exceptional is Classic Mouldings, Inc.

One of the most dramatic transformations to a room is made by the introductions of coffers. The general consensus was that these had to be ‘built-into’ the ceiling using stud framing and drywall/plaster. This is a very costly and time sensitive approach but today’s methods allow this to be simplified by installing the beam and cornice as one piece. The same cornice can have an ornate detail such as an acanthus leaf or a rosette if this is preferred look.

The image shown below shows the beam, cornice within the coffer and the room perimeter cornice, all manufactured as one cast.



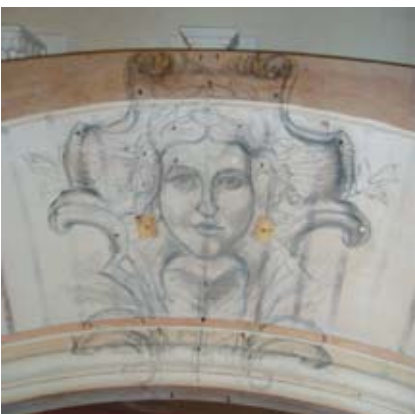
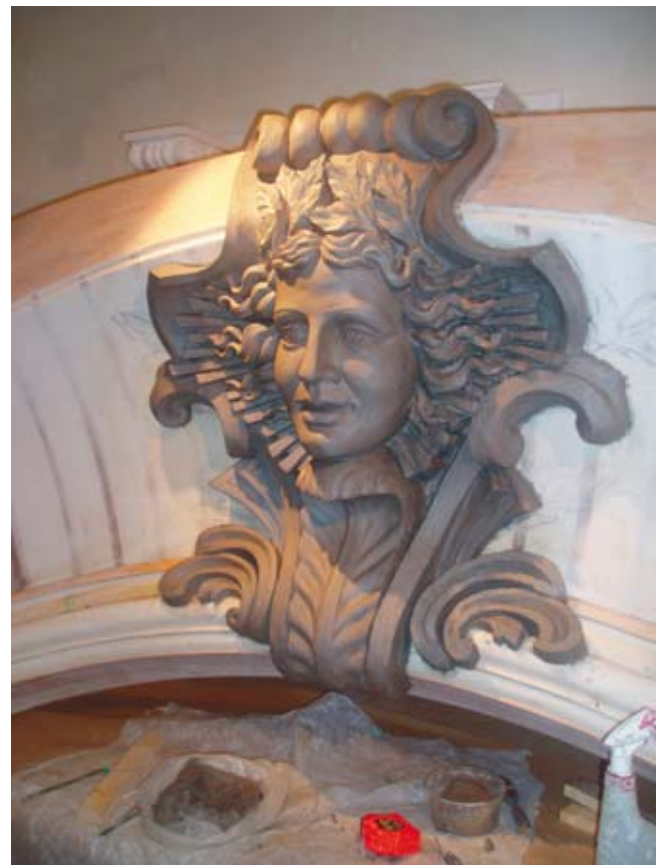


Another modern trend is to introduce concealed lighting to illuminate prominent features and add a warm atmosphere to any room. The image above shows a cornice below the vaulted ceiling to house the lighting source. Below we can see a similar application used very effectively in a hallway.



These are just a few examples of what can be done with a little creativity to transform the new or renovation project that you have planned.

Finally, if you've seen what you want either in a brochure or you can sketch your creation, there are still the craftsmen around who can turn that wish into reality.



Literary Hill Designs
Phone 850-297-1041
Fax 850-297-1074
www.literaryhilldesigns.com