



Stencilling on a Grand Scale: Using Simple Stencils to Create Visual Magic

Sandra Buckingham

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To make a big impression, says stencilling expert Sandra Buckingham, you don't have to re-create the Sistine Chapel. Start small, she counsels, and the rest will follow.

Buckingham's latest book **Stencilling on a Grand Scale** leads do-it-yourselfers beyond the realm of decorative borders featured in her best-selling "Stencilling: A Harrowsmith Guide" to a creative canvas whose limits are determined only by space, time and imagination. The key to her strategy is that a large stencilled work -- be it a door, wall, screen or floor -- can be the seamless sum of its parts. In other words, rather than using an expensive, unwieldy, multi-layered stencil to create a life-sized tree, use three 10 inch stencils of leaf clusters, laying and re-laying them to achieve the desired effect. The only limit to the ultimate size of the finished painting is the room you've set aside for it.

Whether you are fashioning a greeting card or a 40-foot mural, Buckingham recommends the same modest techniques. The methods used to faux-finish a wall -- a vine rambling up a corner, windows stencilled onto an actual door, a false shelf with flowerpots stencilled in an alcove -- can likewise be applied to furniture or folding screens and can be used on any scale.

A technical review of traditional and new stencilling tools is followed by a refresher course in basic stencilling methods, including stencil cutting, hard-surface stencilling, stencilling on primed canvas, overlays, registration and special effects, among them shading, shadows, plant detail and painting skies and landscapes. A chapter on freeform stencilling, with and without masks, prepares readers for the larger-scale works that are the book's central objective.

Buckingham advises perfecting your free-form skills on less ambitious projects (lampshades, borders, placemats) before moving to grander subjects. By the later chapters, stencillers will be comfortable tackling everything from picket and wrought iron fences, lattice work, garden gates, French doors, veranda doors and curtains to paving stones, terra-cotta tiles, carpets, mosaic floors, stone columns, balustrades, terraces, garden walls and room dividers. As always, Buckingham's genius lies in inspiration, and **Stencilling on a Grand Scale** introduces a how-to-world that has no boundaries.



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