

**Brooke Kelly, of Origin Artisans, has Earned the Prestigious Builders Exchange
2006 Craftsman Award.**

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Akron, OH - March, 2007)-- Ohio Valley native Brooke Kelly has earned the prestigious Builders Exchange 2006 Craftsmanship Award.

The award, which was presented in late January, recognized Kelly's work for stencil painting in a historic preservation and art restoration at the First Congregational Church of Akron.

"This award was a surprise and true honor," Kelly said. "I never dreamed of being recognized for doing the work I love."

According to Builders Exchange Magazine, the BX in Cleveland began the program in 1957 to honor the craftsmen who physically shape the northeastern Ohio region.

The Craftsmanship Awards Program was created to take the artisans working on these projects out of obscurity and provide recognition to these professionals for their knowledge, hard work and dedication. At the same time, it honors and encourages the very highest standards of craftsmanship in an industry that often is overlooked and underappreciated.

Kelly, a former Bellaire resident who now lives in Akron, was part of an extensive restoration project that involved restoring the 1910 church meetinghouse to its original interior.

As restoration of the often-redecorated church was underway, a piece of door trim was removed to reveal a delicate, multi-colored stencil. Kelly was responsible for uncovering the stencil and recreating its design using the original elements.

Kelly said she recreated the stencil by piecing together small sections of the original stencil found under door casings.

The remainder of the original stencil had been washed away prior to repainting the sanctuary, so Kelly created a six-foot-long mock-up with colors matched to the original stencil. It was then applied to the entire meetinghouse, which is over 200 linear feet of stencil.

"This was long, painstaking work, but I felt a real sense of accomplishment when it was done," she said. "Coming from the Ohio Valley, where many of the older homes and buildings have artistic and architectural touches that make them unique, it was a privilege to help restore this church to its original beauty."

The Builders Exchange said the craftsmanship award selection process was a rigorous one.



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Each project is nominated formally, and the nominations must include an explanation of why the nominated work is deemed exceptional. The nominated projects are then submitted to a judging process, where they are evaluated, on site, by an engineer and graded on the following criteria:

- overall quality
- complexity of design
- materials used
- difficulty of installation
- size of the project
- whether the components were shop-fabricated or site-fabricated.

The information is then entered into a computer program that determines the award winners.

Kelly leads the Origin Artisans studio, which provides expert renovation and reconstruction of historical interior finishes and decorative painting. Kelly's training, spanning over a decade, has included both classroom study and hands-on experience. She is skilled in both surface applications and three-dimensional techniques. She specializes in period-appropriate historic structures and landmarks.

Origin Artisans also can call on the advanced technological tools and expertise of its parent company, Chambers, Murphy & Burge Restoration Architects. Services include research to uncover original paint schemes, optical microscopy, preparation of period palettes, mock-ups for bidding and quality control, decorative plaster and restoration, mural and stencil cleaning and conservation.



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