Paint an Interior scene

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"Crescent Moon" **2010 - Adobe Photoshop walkthrough**

SCENE SET UP - *When tackling the task of illustrating an interior scene, or any type of architecture for that matter - we need to consider a few very important aspects, such as accurate perspective, light sources and correct shading.*

If we don't address these issues right in the beginning, the outcome of the final paninting will not be what we had in mind.
First and most important, is the perspective. The most commonly used type is the two-point perspective, in which there are two imaginary points called "vanishing points" whose parallel lines cross, creating the grid. Perspective also helps us crate effective composition with the focal point, to direct the viewer's eye around the painting.

vp 1   vp 2

First stage of constructing the scene using two-point perspective. For the sake of composition, it's important not to place any focal points in the center. Note - the green line deviding the walls is slightly off center.

Staging the lighting is also incredibly important to get right. Often enough the strong impact will greatly depend on the correct positioning. Light sources positioned in strategic places around the painting will increase the drama and also add some dimension.
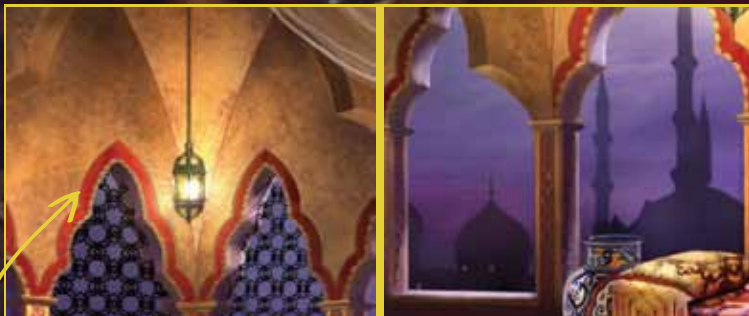Shading will basically give form to any objects in the painting, provide us with contrast and enhance the intensity of the lighting: the stronger the light the deeper the shadows. The lighting skill is one of the most difficult to master- it requires good perception and lots of practice.

There are also other aspects to bare in mind when illustrating interiors. Once you've decided on the architectural style, it's very important to follow key aspects such as form, features and materials, as well as the period and region.

Light sources - Determining the light sources at the early stage is vital. I have placed a directional diffused, natural light source coming from the upper right corner, making it a night-time scene.

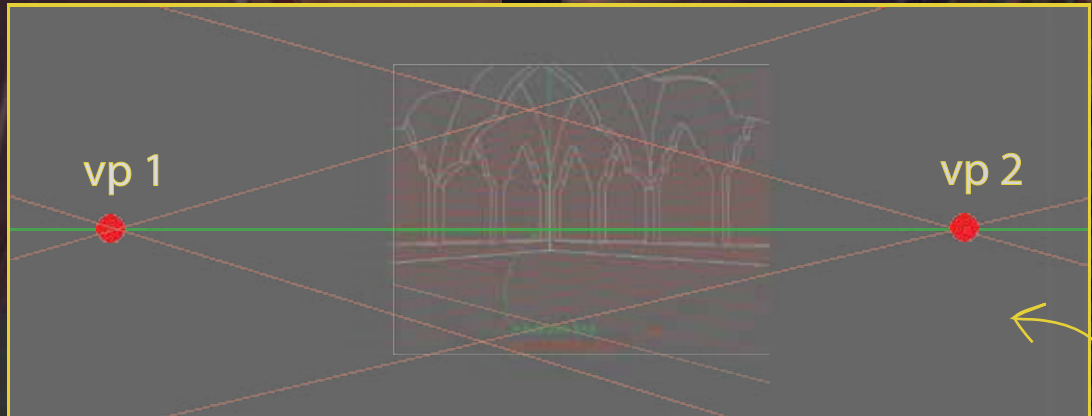Now that some of the theoretical groundwork has been laid down, let me share some insight on this painting.

I wanted to incorporate all the crucial components of Arabic style, to visually present the most accurate, exotic and eye-pleasing image, filled with folkloric elements, forms, shapes and patterns.

Considering the style, there are several factors to think carefully about. The most striking feature in Arabic acrhitecture is the attention given to the interior space as opposed to the exterior. In this case I've used bold, contrasting colors to differentiate the interior from the exterior areas.

According to some beliefs, stylised, grandiose interiors are intended to convey inner beauty and power. Enclosed space, defined by walls, arches and vaults on the interior, and domes on the exterior, are the most important elements of this type of architecture. There's a multitude of decorative treatments apparent in the Arabic decor. The most recognisable are the abstract, geometrical shapes, symmetrically positioned in countinuous fashion, to balance positive and negative space. Additionally, one of the more impressive decorative characteristics is the use of window grilles, or pierced walls with the use of patterns. I was intriqued by the effect of light spilling trought the holes, creating lace-like shadows on the floor.

Texturing and adding shapes to the walls
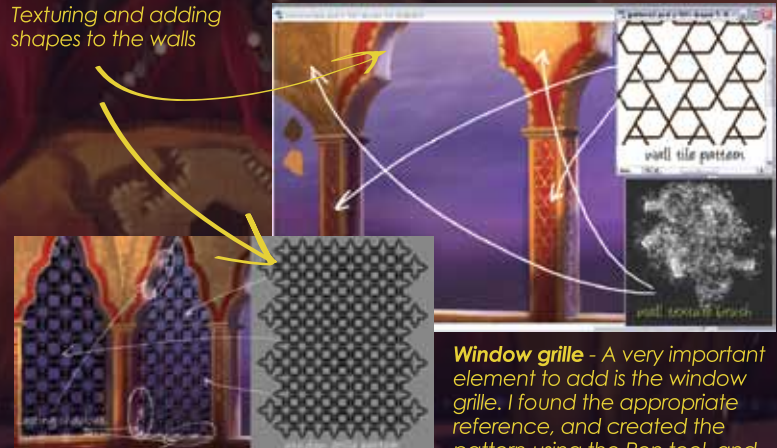
Window grille - A very important element to add is the window grille. I found the appropriate reference, and created the pattern using the Pen tool, and then multiplied it to create an intricate design. It's essential to remember to cast shadows and highlights in appropreate spots to add dimension and a sense of realism.

Contrast between interior and exterior - *Following the main focus of the painting, I used bold, contrasting colors to visually separate the two. I supplied the interior with an abundance of color, texture and pattern. As a guide, I've adapted the Moorish flavor with it's breezy interior, adorned with reds, golds and blues.*
In the contrast, the exterior is represented by the structure as a whole, with hust a hint of it's existance, using cooler blues and purple hues.

With regard to choosing colors, there was no trouble at all. In Arabic culture, a myriad of colors are used in everyday life. Golds and reds are predominant in upmarket Arab interiors, but the rest of the spectrum is not excluded. When deciding on the building materials, I had to choose the most obvious - stone.

Beige, sandy colors always remind me of exotic, remote deserts, so I had to use this for the interior facade.

In terms of colors, this painting represents a lavish oasis in the midst of empty, harsh desert lands, harboring beauty, refinement, style and serenity.

custom made carpet pattern

final carpet within the scene (Edit-Transform-Perspective)
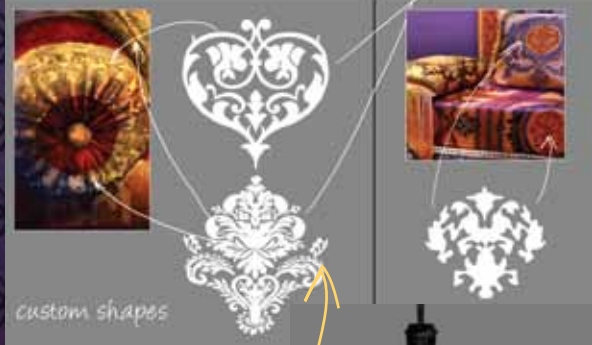
custom shapes

Patterns - *Custom shapes are handy for creating textile patterns. I combined and layered some, and used Transform tool, Burn/Dodge and Blur for depth.*

pattern apparent on every household item

Add detail to make it authentic
When we look at the interior scene, it should tell us about the people who live in it. In this case, the scene represents a wealth and serenity. This detail is fairly small, but it lets the viewer know that this room is used for entertaining, while the number of cups on the table suggests that company is expected.

Finishing touches - *I added curtains, painting each layer separately, using Airbrush Pen with low Opacity setting, using broad strokes with 0% Spacing, crossing strokes randomly. Using the Pen tool, I made "tube" curves, accentuating edges with a low opacity airbrush.*

Adding life to the interior scene

Placement and posing - *a character in the scene adds intimacy, therefore it is needed to a certain degree. At this stage, I use the sketch to roughly block in colors and values.*

skin tone palette

custom speckled brush for blending

Refining - *I now work on features and skin, blending with a custom speckled bush. It lets me capture nice strokes, and prevents the skin from looking dull. It also adds dimension.*

Authentic look - *Now I add some coin jewellery. It is not necessery to add too much detail, so I paint very losely using a regular Hard round brush. Bare in mind the design of anything you paint. It has to look as authentic as possible. Using reference for such details is very helpful.*

coin inlaced wrap

head scarf

personalized detailing