

ARCHITECTURE AWARD (COBRA) WINNERS

COLORADO HOMES & LIFESTYLES

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Whimsy reigns supreme in Ralph and Kay Long's "disguised" bath designed by Lane Oliver. A painted tent complete with resident cat surrounds the glass and iron shower gazebo, transforming a small space into a fantasyland.



Anything can happen when you decide that you don't want your bathroom to look like a bathroom. That was exactly the challenge Lane Oliver was up against when she began designing Ralph and Kay Long's bath.

"We tried to disguise the bathroom and we did that with the help of local artist Scott Sofa [of SMS Studio in Denver]. He painted a mural of a Moroccan tent," says Oliver.

Each wall literally is draped in paint. Yellow-on-yellow striped flowing veils painted on all four walls command attention. A peek outside the drapery reveals a whole other world. Bodies of water and colorful flowers hide in green grass on a background of vast blue sky and puffy white clouds. A glimmering chandelier, its base visible, draws the eye upwards while bringing the 18-foot ceiling down to viewing level.

Cramped quarters called for extra creativity. "Sometimes you get more creative in a really small space than when you have a large space to work with," Kay says.

The shower stands tall in a corner, topped by a decorative iron finial resembling a bird cage. And who better to hold the key to the cage than Rosko, Kay's beloved cat of 18 years, painted on the wall with the key in his paw.

"The powder room is like a little jewel. Guests walk into the room, shut the door and really have a chance to take it all in," says Kay.

This whimsical bath definitely makes a statement. "Some people are so timid. Be daring, go out of your element and try something new," urges Oliver. □

