

Applying these products -- Venetian plaster, for example -- is a three-day, three-coat process. First the walls are primed; a first coat of the product is applied on the second day; the second coat on the third day.

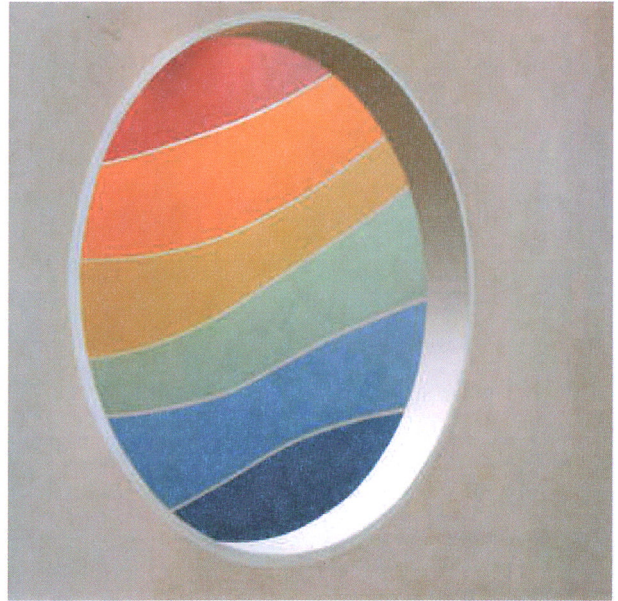
"A big home may take months," says Benalloun. "We've done some really big lobbies. But we don't do baseboards, doors or other millwork. You can hire a regular painter [to use plain paint] for that." Cost ranges from \$6 to \$8 a square foot applied. A gallon of white Venetian plaster -- which can be custom colored -- costs \$65 and can cover 90 square feet.

Benalloun hosts luncheon presentations for architects and designers "who specify specialty products." He's looking for dealers in other parts of Florida, and elsewhere in the United States.

And he has another, ambitious goal. "Europeans have been using Venetian plaster for 400 years. My goal is for every American home to have at least one wall of Venetian plaster because it's such a thing of beauty."

Florida Finds is a weekly feature about purveyors of home products in South Florida. To suggest stores, craftspersons or manufacturers to profile, e-mail newhomes@miami

herald.com.



DONNA E. NATALE PLANAS / MIAMI HERALD STAFF

COLORS GALORE: Featured in the circle is Ottocento, a metallic plaster that comes in a range of colors.