

Ornament Painting

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Back in the olden days, Lewiscraft sold very nice 3D plaster paint-your-own ornaments. They were beautifully detailed, and as I recall, they were about 75 cents apiece.



These days, though you can still find the flat-backed kind, 3D unpainted plaster ornaments are much harder to find. Now I buy the 3D ones whenever I see them at thrift stores, as I occasionally do, because it seems we have developed a Christmas tradition.



When DH and I painted our first plaster ornaments decades ago, we did it as a bit of a lark, but it's turned into an annual thing. Since then, we've built up quite a collection, going back almost to our first Christmas together.



Nowadays, one of the joys of decorating the tree is unboxing all those ornaments that we've painted together over the years. Sentimentalist that he is, DH has come to treasure these blasts from the past as much as I do.

And I must say, when carefully painted and finished with a coat of sealer, these detailed plaster ornaments are really nice, and they look as good on the tree as any of the purchased ones.

As you can see from the photos, we've painted lots of different themes, from Santas and snowmen to penguins to fireplaces and stockings.



There are a lot of cat designs among these vintage paintable plaster ornaments, and DH loves to colour them as tuxedo cats, in memory of our beloved Meestie.



I've painted a few Meesties myself over the years, but I also have a special fondness for bunnies, and for these adorable woodland animal houses.

Back when we first started painting ornaments, we often did more than one in a session, but as the collection grew, we began limiting our output to one ornament each per year.

Below you can see the ornaments we've painted over the past three years.





It's fun to see all these ornaments again as we decorate the tree each year, and fun too to add two new ones with our annual painting day. Here are our most recent additions.

For 2024, DH gave his Santa a green suit in the tradition of the Celtic Green Man. Santa's shiny blue sunglasses are a comic touch typical of DH.

I love the log cabin style of this bird house, and had fun painting it in variegated brown tones. The little red bird clutching a twig of holly is just adorable!



For Christmas 2023, I couldn't resist this hilarious rabbit-froggie combo. The top hat put me in mind of Michigan J. Frog of Looney Tunes fame, so I painted them in the colours of Bugs Bunny and Michigan Frog. I love the frog's expression.

For his 2023 ornament, DH chose another cat – a comical one this time, with a mouse perched on his head. And of course he's painted it as a tuxedo cat.



Back in 2022, DH painted a bear holding a Christmas stocking; the word "Bear" on the sock is partly an homage to our dear cat Bearly, who was still with us then.

I love depictions of Santa with woodland animals, so I selected Santa cradling a baby deer in his arms.

Prior to the pandemic, we used to host an annual ornament-painting evening with friends, but like so many things disrupted by Covid, it's never quite gotten back on track. Maybe 2025 will be the year to resurrect this fun tradition. Pretty sure I have enough ready-to-paint ornaments put aside to supply the group!

