Faux Finishing and Faux Painting are terms used to describe a wide range of decorative painting or plastering techniques. The name comes from the French word faux meaning false, as these techniques started as a form of using paint or plaster to replicate materials such as marble and wood, but has subsequently come to encompass many other decorative finishes for walls and ceilings.

In modern day faux finishing, there are two major materials/processes used. 1) Glaze work; involves using a translucent mixture of paint and glaze applied with a brush, roller, rag, or sponge. 2) Plaster work; may be done with tinted plasters, or washed over with earth pigments, and is generally applied with a trowel or spatula. The finished result can be either smooth or textured.

Venetian Plaster is a thin specialty decorative plaster coating that can be used over any standard gypsum board system or plaster base and can be categorized as either a traditional or faux finish depending the product's materials and application. The colors and textures are unique to the material used and application procedure.

All venetian or "venetian-like" plasters are proprietary coatings. Three main types of venetian plaster exist with different characteristics and price points.

**NATURAL LIME-BASED:**
Historical Venetian plaster is traditionally composed of a lime slake, natural minerals and pigments. A two to four part process (coats), this labor-intensive plaster is applied with standard plastering tools, is abusive-resistant and can be used for exterior and interior purposes.

**ACRYLIC-BASED:**
Less labor intensive, acrylics formulated for exterior use are applied by a plasterer to a properly densified brown coat or an acrylic-modified skim coat. Finishers apply this material to a level 5 gypsum board finish.

**GYPSUM-BASED:**
Often the most cost effective, gypsum venetian plaster performs and is installed very much like gypsum board compound. These products tend to be the least labor-intensive but, they are not as abusive-resistant as natural lime-based plasters. Only a level 3 gypsum board finish is required for some Gypsum Venetian plasters.