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WIZARDRY

Artist turns son's bedroom into Harry Potter world



STAFF PHOTOS BY JOHN STORZMAN

Styled about Harry: Donna Cherry, a retired artist, painted son Brandon's bedroom to resemble a castle that the popular fictional hero Harry Potter would recognize. On the wall by the bed, characters from the Harry Potter books are depicted playing the game of Quidditch. Cherry made the pillows on the bed, which feature crests from Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

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When Harry Potter does his homework on magic spells at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, he is in a castle, his white owl named Hedwig sometimes nearby.

When 9-year-old Brandon Cherry of Oakland Township does similar "homework" in his bedroom, he is in an area that looks like a castle, thanks to the artistic wizardry of his mother, Donna. Brandon's white owl is in the room, too. Donna Cherry, a retired artist and a member of the Oakland Township Historical Society, recently transformed Brandon's bedroom into a world inspired by the adventures of Harry Potter, the fictional hero of J.K. Rowling's popular series of books.

"He loves Harry Potter, he breathes Harry Potter," Cherry said of her son. Brandon's father, Steve Cherry, read one or two chapters from Rowling's books to Brandon every night. They have read all four books — *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* and *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* — and are starting the series over again. In April, Brandon had a birthday party with a Harry Potter theme, including a sorting hat. He



Decorating wizard: Donna Cherry tries on her son's sorting hat. Above left, Brandon reclines on the duvet cover.

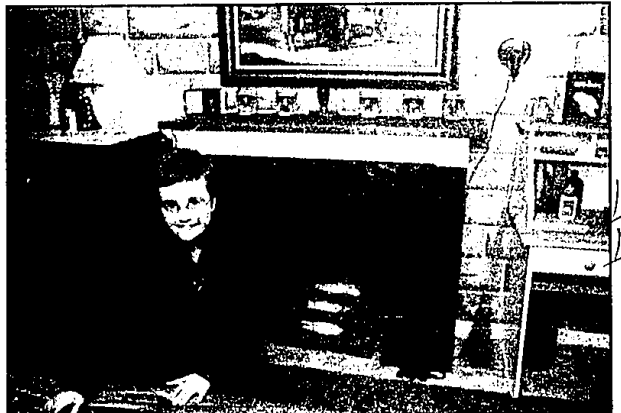
the pillows and a friend made the duvet cover. In two areas, the walls appear to be open to a blue sky. Characters from the book are depicted in a game of Quidditch, which is like soccer played on flying brooms, in one of the areas. Blue sky can also be seen behind a plush white owl (Hedwig) that is perched on a branch in one corner of the room. The "opening" is so Hedwig can come and go with ease, Cherry explained. This corner contains a desk and chair. Cherry got the chair, which features a cutout design on the back, from a garage sale. It was red and she painted it black. Along one wall is a fireplace, at which an electric flame glows from behind imitation logs. The

marble mantel is actually painted plywood. The fireplace hardware at one side is from a garage sale. A small broom stands at the other side. On a smaller scale, the painted figures of Norbert the Norwegian Ridgeback dragon and Scabbers the rat can be seen close to the floor. Cherry painted the bedroom's blue sky and light white clouds onto the hallway walls, which had been dark green. Brandon appeared delighted with the decor, as he pointed out details to a visitor and explained their meaning. The visitor asked whether Brandon's glasses had tape over his nose, like Harry Potter's. "No," Brandon said. "I haven't broken them yet."



To scale: This painting of Norbert, the dragon from the Harry Potter books, shows the detail of Donna Cherry's artistic decor.

dressed as Harry Potter for Halloween. He has seen the new movie, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, twice. "I like how he cooks up spells and potions," said Brandon, a fourth grader at Pine Tree Elementary School in Lake Orion. It took Donna Cherry three weeks to decorate the bedroom, which measures approximately 12 by 15 feet. Brandon's room had been painted hunter green and white — green on the bottom half of the walls, and white on the upper half and ceiling. Cherry asked Brandon how he would like the room redecorated. "He said he wanted it to look like a castle like Harry Potter," she said. "Brandon and I would talk, I would do a few sketches." Brandon made suggestions; for example, making the bricks rounded at a "window." Before painting, Cherry researched how stones would look in a wall and archway. She would lie on a pillow when painting close to the floor. After her redecorating magic, the room resembles a castle, with bricks painted on the walls and with a floor made of tile that looks like slate. On the bed are a colorful duvet cover featuring Harry, a band of stars spreading from his wand, and pillows with crests of Hogwarts and the student houses — Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw and Slytherin. Donna Cherry made



Set a spell: Brandon Cherry, 9, can work on his "magic" in his room, which contains a fireplace with an electric flame.



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Garden Spot, Page 3



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Appliance Doctor, Page 2