

2010 Mosaic Arts International Exhibition Guide

A Guide To Materials Used Throughout This Exhibition

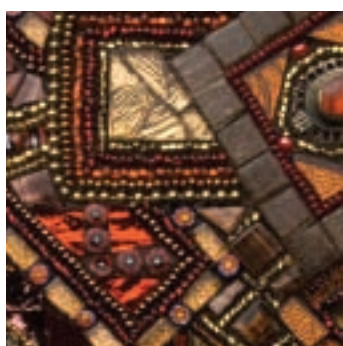
Welcome to the ninth annual exhibition of contemporary mosaic art sponsored by the Society of American Mosaic Artists. The detail photographs in this guide illustrate some of the many materials and techniques used in creating mosaics, as well as core design concepts used throughout the ages.

We hope you find it a useful enhancement of your visit, whether you are already a mosaic art enthusiast or encountering the medium for the first time.

Beads

Round decorative elements of varying sizes pierced through the center to allow for threading. They are made of many materials including glass, ceramic, bone, and polymer clay.

See Laurel Skye, *Rajasthani Tapestry*



Ceramic

Kiln-fired clay that can be porous or non-porous.

See Emma Biggs, *Five Sisters*



Found Objects

Can include a wide range of materials discovered in various locations. Examples include, but are not limited to, old plates, marbles, jewelry. When placed in a mosaic, various found objects, often inexpensive, can provide different textures and give a personal, creative aspect.

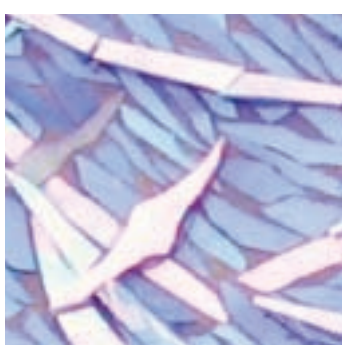
See Laurie Mika, *Time Heals*



Grout

A paste made of cement and sand that is inserted in the gaps between tesserae in a mosaic for both decoration of the work and stabilization.

See Laura Rendlen, *Thermals*



Mixed Media

A combination of various distinct media in a single work.

See Pamela Goode, *Late Bloomer*



Polymer Clay

A lightweight synthetic clay that can be modeled or sculpted and is generally cured in an oven.

See Laurie Mika, *Time Heals*



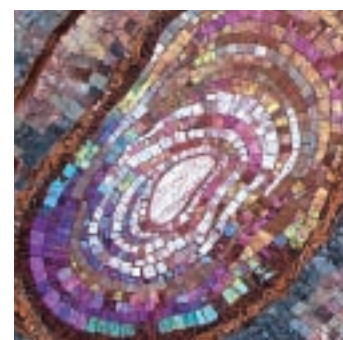
Glass

An inorganic substance consisting of silicates and various metal oxides which may determine properties such as color, hardness, and transparency. Said to have been invented by the Phoenicians, glass began to be used widely for mosaics during the Roman era. Among the most renowned glass mosaics are those from the Byzantine period.

Dichroic Glass

Glass resulting from a method of coating glass sheets with an extremely thin layer of metal oxide, such as gold, silver, magnesium, or titanium. No two pieces of dichroic glass will be the same.

See Sophie Drouin, *Bull's Eye*



Mirrored Glass

Glass that covers a layer of metal to produce a highly reflective surface.

See Dianne Sonnenberg, *Ocean(egg)raphy*



Stained Glass

A thin glass sheet that be cut easily into desired shapes. Iridescent stained glass has a metallic sheen, like oil on the surface.

See John Sollinger, *Radiance*



Tempered Glass

Also described as "toughened glass," is known for its strength and use in everyday products like automobile windshields. One safety feature is its ability to shatter into thumbnail-size pieces upon impact. While compressed on rollers and heated to high temperatures, unlike other glass-making techniques, tempered glass is rapidly cooled to increase its strength and durability.

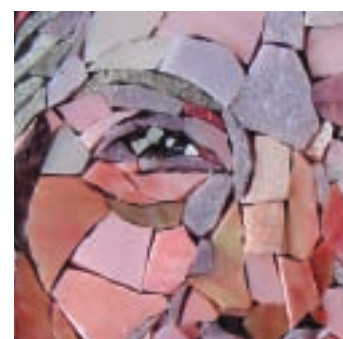
See Dianne Sonnenberg, *Ocean(egg)raphy*



Vitreous Glass

A uniform manufactured glass tile used widely in architectural applications.

See Shug Jones, *Momma*



Millefiori

Means "one thousand flowers" in Italian. Canes of glass are arranged to create flower-like or geometric patterns. The technique originated in ancient Egypt.

See Carol Shelkin, *Fabulous Hair*



Smalti

The plural of smalto, also known by some as enameled glass. This is glass, mostly opaque, in which metal oxides are mixed to give an extraordinary range of color. The molten glass is poured into disks, cooled, and cut into smaller rectangular pieces which the mosaicist will further shape using tools such as a hammer. Smalti are typically laid with the cut sides face up to achieve the most brilliant effects. Traditionally, smalti are produced in Venice and Murano in Italy, though today there are factories in Mexico. A more expensive variety of smalti contain a thin layer of copper, gold, or silver leaf sandwiched beneath a thin layer of clear glass and a thicker glass base that may be clear or colored. Some mosaicists prefer the term Venetian Gold although, like the colored smalti, this material is now also produced in countries other than Italy.

See Mireille Swinnen, *La Bella Figura*

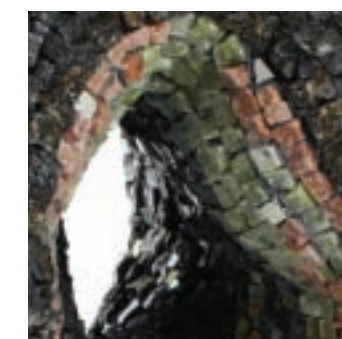


Stone

Granite

An igneous rock composed of quartz, feldspar, and mica. The stone can range in color from white to black and also appears in shades of green, pink, or red and is a very popular mosaic material.

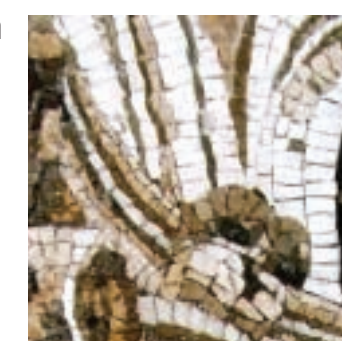
See Wendy Raven, *Geode*



Marble

Metamorphosed limestone appearing in a variety of colors, the purest form of which is white. This material, because of its prevalence, was often used in ancient mosaics and continues to be widely employed in contemporary mosaics.

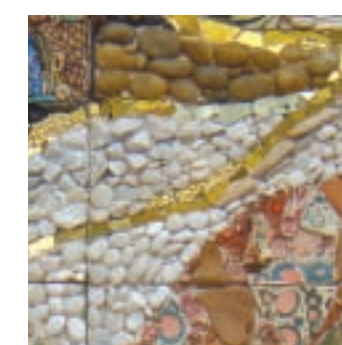
See Michael Kruzich, *Corinthian*



Pebbles

Small stones that are generally used in their natural states as they have been refined through erosion (i.e. by water) or in the process of quarrying larger blocks. Pebbles are among the earliest mosaic materials used in ancient Mediterranean and Greek cultures.

See Ilana Shafir, *Temples*



Selenite

A variety of colorless, transparent gypsum. The crystals can be used whole or cleaved into thin slices.

See Sonia King, *Permatrust*



Slate

Dark stone that is prone to split into thin slices as a result of the composition of layers of shale and clay.

See Alicia Kelemen, *Lineas II*

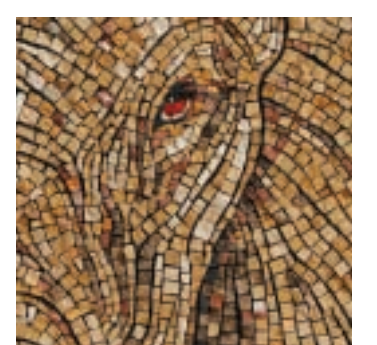


Methods of Production

Andamento

From the Italian *andare*, "to walk or ride." Describes the placement of tesserae in a flowing pattern suggesting movement and rhythm.

See Sandra Groeneveld, *Elephant Eye*



Tessera/ae

Narrowly defined as a cube or square, these are the "building blocks" of mosaic design. A broader definition would include all individual components of any shape which, in company with others, form the complete mosaic.

See Kate Kerrigan, *Rainy Day, Central Park*



Opus

Latin for "work." A series of labels developed to describe the various styles and visual effects of laying mosaics, including: Opus Sectile, Opus Tessellatum, and Opus Vermiculatum.

Sectile

From the Latin *sectilis*, "to cut, cut work." Describes a type of mosaic in which multicolored stones are cut into thin slabs of organic or geometric shapes, and the mosaic image relies on the careful joining of these shaped pieces of stone.

Carole Choucari Oueijan, *Layaleena*



Tessellatum

From the Latin *tessellatus*, "set with small cubes." Generically refers to any mosaic using tesserae (usually cubes), though it can refer to a regular placing of tesserae in uniform horizontal or vertical lines.

See Matteo Randi, *Golden Section*



Vermiculatum

From the Latin *vermiculus*, "little worm." Describes a mosaic in which tesserae are placed in irregular lines. Originally the method was used in small sections of Roman mosaics to outline details. The technique is now used most often to add the suggestion of movement to a mosaic.

See Cynthia Fisher, *To Every Thing There Is a Season*



2010 Exhibition Guide was produced by JeanAnn Dabb and students in the "Mosaics: History and Techniques" classes at University of Mary Washington, Fredericksburg, Virginia, 2007-2009: Melody Fitzgerald, Elizabeth Goble, Sarah Hagan, Michael Howard, Ashley Jones, Patti Kuny, Kandy Lovelidge, Emily McAlpine, Aidan McCurdy, Jane Mangione, Amanda Shackelford.