

# Philadelphia 2010

# Tell-Tale Tiles & Fractured Fantasies

**Presented by Philadelphia's Magic Gardens and the Tile Heritage Foundation**

Held in conjunction with The 44th Annual National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA)

&

Philagrafika 2010 - Independent Projects

Philadelphia's independent festival celebrating print in contemporary art

**A National Juried Exhibition of Tiles & Mosaic 2010**

**March 19 - April 19 2010**

Philadelphia's Magic Gardens, Philadelphia PA

**Juror**

**Susan Tunick**

A national spokesperson for the preservation of architectural terra cotta, an established ceramic artist living and working in New York, Susan Tunick is the president of Friends of Terra Cotta

*"This so-called 'literary' side of the craft, this storytelling...has been my primary impulse or inspiration... But if tiles could tell no story, inspire or teach nobody, and only serve to produce aesthetic thrills, I would have stopped making them long ago."*

-Henry Chapman Mercer



## **Inspiration for the Exhibition**

**Tell-Tale Tiles & Fractured Fantasies** is inspired by the rich history of tile and mosaic art in the Philadelphia area over the past 100 years. In 1898, archeologist Henry Chapman Mercer began to make ceramic tiles in Doylestown, north of Philadelphia. Mercer is considered pivotal in America's embrace of the Arts and Crafts movement. He said in 1925, "This so-called 'literary' side of the craft, this storytelling... has been my primary impulse or inspiration... But if tiles could tell no story, inspire or teach nobody, and only serve to produce aesthetic thrills, I would have stopped making them long ago." Many local and national tile makers today owe their understanding of the craft to his legacy, preserved for perpetuity at the Moravian Pottery and Tile Works and at Mercer's former residence, Fonthill, now a museum.

Similarly, Isaiah Zagar, a nationally acknowledged master of mosaic, has forever changed Philadelphia's public façades with his 40+ years of ceramic and glass mosaic work, capturing neighborhood stories and adding a sense of community into a once run-down urban landscape. Philadelphia's Magic Gardens was formed as a museum to preserve and embrace Zagar's legacy of community beautification through his relentless mosaic work. He continues to revitalize forgotten spaces with monthly public workshops, capturing community-reflective stories in the mosaics that clad over 100 city walls.

## **Description of the Exhibition**

**Tell-Tale Tiles & Fractured Fantasies** explores contemporary tile making and ceramic mosaic as a story-telling medium in the spirit of artists Henry Chapman Mercer and Isaiah Zagar. The scope of the exhibition includes social, political, personal and family stories.

The majority of the art works in the exhibition are available for purchase prior to April 19, 2010. For a price list and availability contact Philadelphia's Magic Gardens Gallery: [info@philadelphiamagicgardens.org](mailto:info@philadelphiamagicgardens.org) or (215) 733 0390

## **Juror's Statement**

Jurying an exhibition can be an eye opening experience. In this case, it certainly was. I was greatly impressed by the high level of craftsmanship which was evident in the submissions. As a ceramic artist, I am always looking at that issue as part of the total experience of a piece. In addition, a very wide range of clay bodies, firing techniques and glazes were evident in the work I reviewed.

Perhaps most unexpected was the natural way in which the work tended to fall into one of four "categories." These included large tiles with only a minimal amount of relief; shaped tiles which often were used to create mosaic pieces; very sculptural, three dimensional work; and more traditional square, flat tiles that relied on varied decorative methods such as photo silk-screen, tube-lining, slip decoration, etc.

The number of pieces I was asked to choose was limited by the exhibition space available. Thus, I tried to select pieces that "spoke" to me – interested me, made me curious, and those that delighted me. It was very satisfying to see what a wonderful range of expression can be created through the use of ceramic tiles.

-Susan Tunick

## Best In Show

### Pastime Near A Rigorously Modern Building



Shanna Fliegel  
Oxford, NJ  
19 x 19 x 1 inches Low-fire ceramic  
**\*Best In Show Prize\***

Here is the importance of play and imagination, despite society's omniscient attitude. Humans are amazing in their ability to engineer and construct skyscrapers and are commendable in their capacity to intellectualize; however it is easy to ignore beauty, simplicity, and joy.

—S. Fliegel

## Second Place

### Self-Portrait



Ashley Gray  
Little Rock, AR  
**\*Second Prize\***  
24.5 x 21.5 x 3 inches  
Stoneware tiles, glaze, poplar frame

My self-perception is composed of the feelings and desires that have been consistent throughout my life. As a child, I wanted to see everything and do extraordinary things. With these desires almost bursting out of me, I felt somewhat trapped as a child. If it wasn't a battle of good versus evil or beauty over ugliness, I imagined it was and created my own adventures. Instead of using the door, I pretended that I had to sneak out my window as if I wasn't allowed outside. I imagined a walk in the woods was a long trek to far off places. I still have the same desire to see and experience as much as I can as I did when I was younger. The things that I see and experience inspire me to spend long days in the studio trying to incorporate them into my sculptures and reliefs.

—A. Gray

## Third Place

### Best Friends



Shawn Newton  
Wallingford, CT

12 x 16 inches

**\*Third Prize\***

Unglazed porcelain tile

*“I live while I skate; I feel every motion; all the muscles speak and answer me, as it were. I talk with my arms, my shoulders, with all my limbs, and think of music—of flying, if you will.”*

—George Meagher (1895)

The narrative is about, quite simply, the pure joy of skating. Being a skater myself I am drawn to the interest of our predecessors in this wintertime sport and the stories illustrated by prints of the era.

Here, a young girl shares the spirit of Meagher’s statement with her exuberant best friend. All that is needed is an old set of sheets and a clear patch of ice.

—S. Newton

## Tile Heritage Prize

### **Polar Bear and Inupiaq Girl**



Edwin R. Mighell, Jr.

Anchorage, AK

12 x 12 x 0.5 inches

**\*Tile Heritage Prize\***

Collograph print on glacial clay

People of the northern coasts share the ice-scape with the polar bears during the winter months and at one time pretty much survived off the seals as the polar bears do today. My mother told me of one time when she was a little girl that her father had left her alone on the ice to follow some polar bear tracks. Later, when I saw Henry Rousseau's painting Gypsy and Lion, I was reminded my mother's story.

I used glacial clay from Cook Inlet near Anchorage, Alaska, to create this piece. The image is cut out of etching paper that is glued to a matteboard plate. The plate is wiped with black mason stain, the excess wiped off, put on the press bed with a slab of damp, but firm, clay, and run through the press. I'm printing on clay as if it were paper. The raised black lines are waxed to help keep the different glazes separate.

—E.R. Mighell, Jr.



**Las Dos de Rojo**

Felice Amato  
St. Paul, MN  
16 x 15 x 4 inches  
Low-fire ceramic, wire

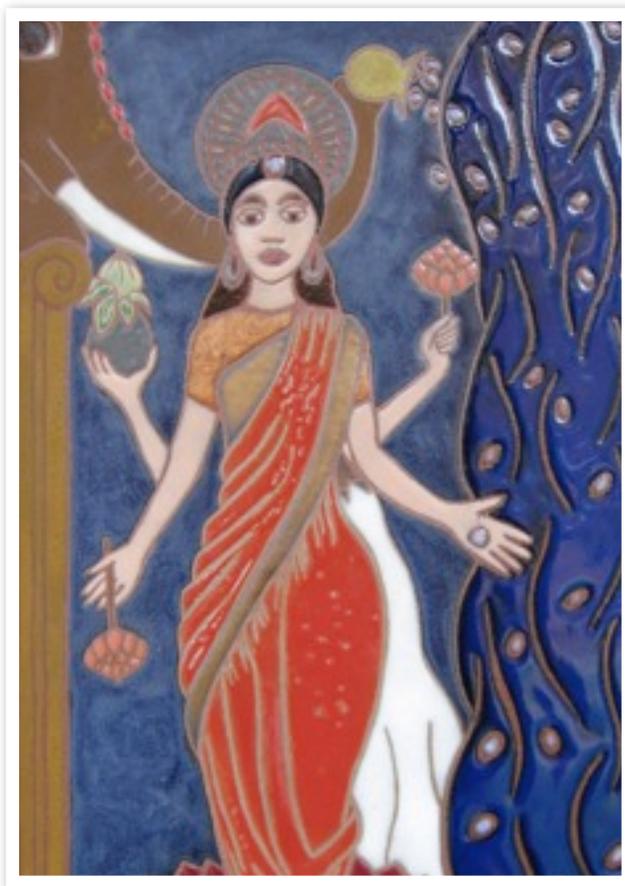
There once was a mother and daughter living in the properness of a gingham sunrise. No one knew their morning secrets; like matadors in starched red dresses, their days began with a series of face-offs. They snorted, stamped and spilled their way into the day.

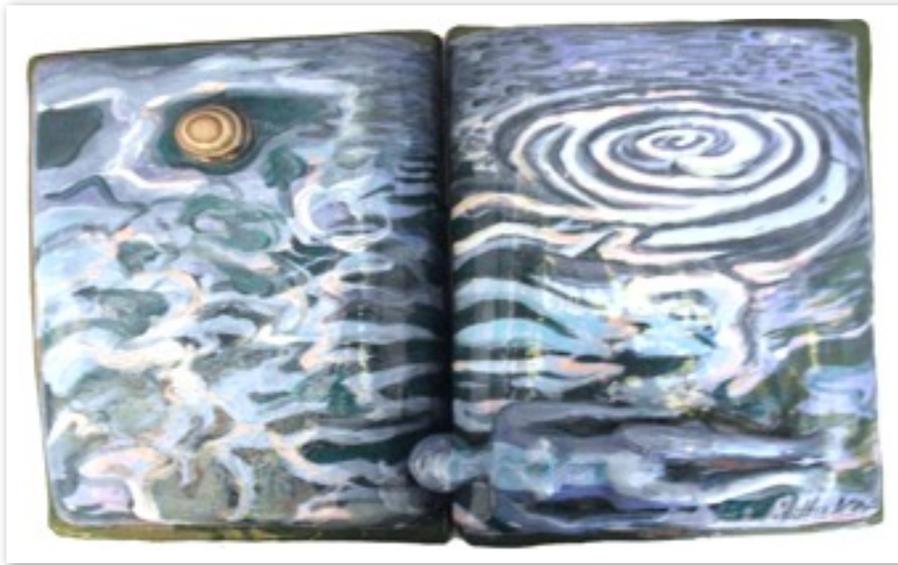
-Felice Amato

**Lakshmi's Waterfall**

Marina Bosetti  
Raleigh, NC  
18.5 x 12.5 x 1 inches  
High-fire stoneware and porcelain, powder-coated wrought iron

One will ask, "what's the story here?"





**Water Lilies**

Donna Billick

Davis, CA

21 x 26 x 2 inches

Low-fire ceramic, grout

**No More Waterboarding, End of Story**

Donna Billick

Davis, CA

20.5 x 12.16 x 4.25 inches

Low-fire ceramic, grout

Water in its wisdom moves around obstacles with flow. This group of images is about water, our most essential, precious resource. No More Waterboarding, End of Story is our ethical challenge to purify our morals. Water is a transformative vision, for us to create a world together we can love.

-D. Billick





**Tree of Life**

Natalie Blake

Brattleboro, VT

35 x 35 x 2 inches

Sgraffito-carved porcelaneous stoneware



The “Tree of Life,” a universal symbol found in many spiritual traditions, is a symbol of healing, growth and regeneration. Tall and strong, it has deep roots. It reaches skyward. It loses its leaves and grows new ones; it gives shelter. With nurture and care, it lives for generations. A tree also bears seeds or fruits, which contain the essence of the tree, and this continuous regeneration is a potent symbol of immortality.

The resounding feature of my work is the appearance of softness and lushness, as if one is looking at a wall textile. The work invites the hand to flow over the carved lines. The fluidity of the carved lines, combined with the strength and solidity of the imagery, provides energy and a welcoming presence in any room.

–N. Blake



### **Earth Sea Pods**

Julie Byczynski

Evansville, IN

16 x 21.75 x 2 inches

Hand-built and wheel-thrown high-fire ceramic, glaze, glass frit

### **Gulf Sea Pods**

Julie Byczynski

Evansville, IN

19.5 x 19.5 x 2 inches

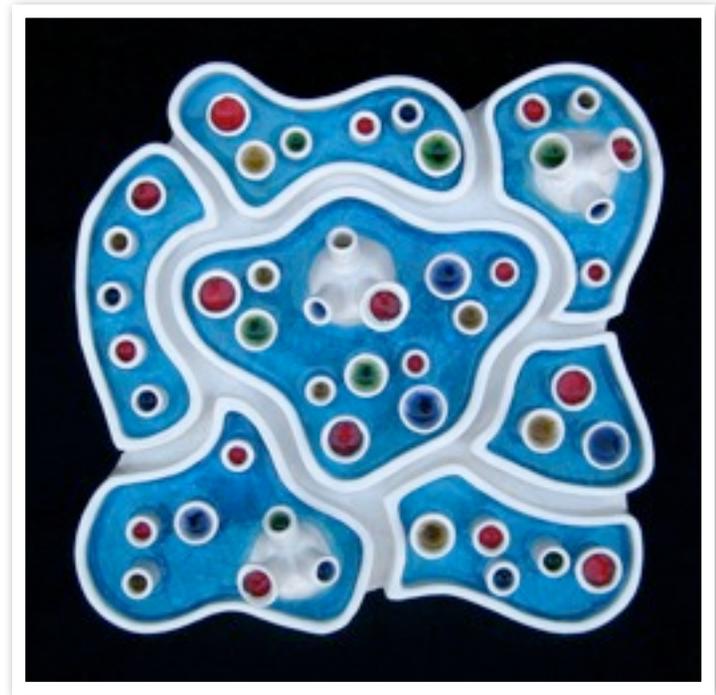
High-fire ceramic, ceramic glaze, glass frit

I had an idea about barrels floating in the ocean that had different colored chemicals sloshing about in them. But the barrels were made of clay and the oceans had pure translucent milk colored walls surrounding them. I felt that the clay barrels were some kind of cleaners or filters.

So, the next day I threw some clay pods on the wheel and added them to a series of tiles. After another month and much experimentation the result was one beautiful 6" tile. The work depicted here were the second and third works that resulted from the ocean vision.

Each tile is hand-built, glazed and then infused with aquamarine glass frit. Imbedded in this tile are various sizes of small glazed pods. Inside each pod is also glass frit in hues of amber, red, cobalt blue and green.

-J. Byczynski



**Frieze**

Ava Blitz  
Wynnewood, PA  
9 x 12 x 2 inches each  
Concrete



These reliefs, animated by raked lighting, are dimensional narrative drawings carved in stone and cast in cement, porcelain, or plaster. Frieze expresses the dualities of the physical, elemental state of nature, and the spiritual, metaphoric, and contemplative nature. I am intrigued by the mysterious similarity of forms found in biology, botany, geology, and anthropology. Confounding scale, my work alludes to the cycles of life and the passage of time, petrified in materials of the earth. Distinctions appear ambiguous between fossil and artifact, natural and cultural history, and the present, past and future.

Some of my sculptural forms use traditional building methods: shingling, masonry, tiling, and paving. My building blocks are non-traditional reliefs, sculptures, or sculptural fragments. In the near future I hope to create architectural fragments or follies by mortaring together casts to realize an architectural scale. The resulting structures would be rich in drawing and narrative, inside and/or out

–A. Blitz

**Brook Trout**

Eric C. Boynton  
Souderton, PA  
16 x 21.75 x .5 inches  
Low-fire ceramic, 18th and 19th century  
hardwoods

The story of Pennsylvania’s treasured state fish, the brook trout, can probably be best traced with man’s love of sporting and the capturing of one of nature’s most beautiful game fishes. Especially prized by fly fisherman, the brook trout can be found in many of Pennsylvania’s waterways. Most of the trout are raised and released from hatcheries. However, some of the native “brookies” still exist in the higher elevations where the streams still run cold and clear, an indicator of the health of these waters.

–E. Boynton





**Byella Utka (The White Duck)**

Angela Klaerner Clark  
 Philadelphia, PA  
 15 x 21 x 3 inches  
 High-fire porcelain, earthenware

There once was a Czar who married a beautiful princess. He loved her dearly. Unfortunately he needed to go on a dangerous journey and had to leave her behind. He warned her not to talk to strangers or stray too far from the palace. An old woman arrived claiming to be the Czar’s aunt. The old woman convinced her to take a walk in the woods and there by a small lake she revealed that she was a witch. She turned the princess into a duck and in turn assumed the body of the princess.

When the Czar returned he noticed a change in the princess but otherwise assumed all was okay. Then one day as they approached the small lake he noticed a white duck that was quaking incessantly. The false princess ordered it shot. The duck flew into the arms of the Czar and reverted to the princess.  
 – A. Clark

**Secret Wind**

Francoise Choveau  
 Hereford, PA  
 16 x 24 x 1 inches  
 Low-fire ceramic mosaic, wonderboard, grout

There are permanent winds that live in the present tense: the Aajej in southern Morocco, the Arifi, which scorches with numerous tongues. There are other, less constant winds that change direction: the Bist-Roz leaps into Afghanistan, the rolling Ghibli from Tunis, the Dattoo out of Gibraltar, which carries fragrance. There is also the -----, the secret wind of the desert, whose name was erased by a king after his son died within it. Other, private winds...”

–Excerpt of *The English Patient* from Michael Ondaatje





***The Papaya Waltz***  
Charlie Cummings  
Gainesville, FL  
15 x 15 x 0.25 inches  
High-fire porcelain

The papaya continues the waltz alone,  
dancing with the ghost of the sloth.  
—C. Cummings

***The Dance of the Silk Floss Tree***

Charlie Cummings  
Gainesville, FL  
15 x 15 x 0.25 inches  
High-fire porcelain

Even though the opponent in this  
gentleman's war is long gone, the Silk  
Floss Tree stands ever vigilant against  
those who would steal its bark.

—C. Cummings



**A Shattered Life**

Jimmy Clark  
Philadelphia, PA  
18 x 10 inches  
Low-fire ceramic, found shards

Several years ago I noticed a crowd outside the Hopkinson House Apartments on Washington Square. A man had spent the morning in confrontation with the police following a domestic dispute. He had thrown many belongings from the apartment's balcony before ultimately setting it on fire. As the police broke into the apartment he jumped from that balcony to the balcony of an apartment below. He broke in and continued creating havoc setting that apartment ablaze as well. As the police arrived there, he again escaped to another balcony. This continued for a time as he managed to elude the police by jumping from balcony to balcony. Onlookers assembled and witnessed the commotion. Ultimately he slipped and fell to his death. By the time I arrived the corpse had been removed. I noticed these shards by the curbside, remnants of a life gone terribly wrong and an untimely end. —J. Clark



**Medusa**

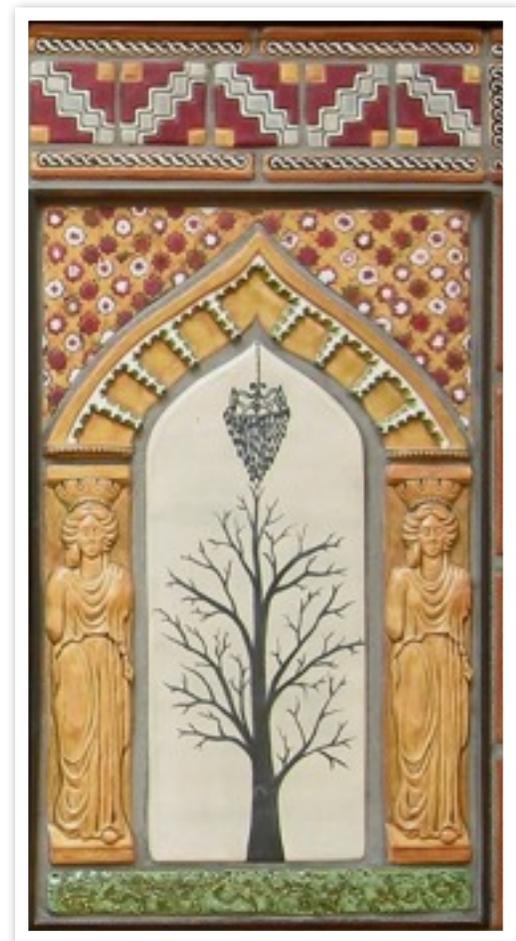
Lynn Denton  
Philadelphia, PA  
20 x 24 inches  
Ceramic, grout

My imagery refers to archetypal energy and the unconscious. In all of my visual art –painting, mosaics and films –I am also often influenced by textiles, music and dance. I begin from a place of unknowing, so that the content is discovered during the process. My hope is that the forms and symbols in the work will resonate with the viewer on this deeper level.

–L. Denton



**Trip-Tick**  
 Diana Faris  
 Indianapolis, IN  
 29 x 45.75 x 2.25 inches  
 Low-fire ceramic



My tile-work is strongly influenced by Oriental carpet design as well as Greek, Roman, and Islamic art and architecture. As a child, growing up during the war in Beirut, our rugs became my playground. Their colors, designs and symbolism provided gardens for play and respite from the world outside. They now present me with a format to express stories and opinions, using my personal symbols instead of traditional imagery.

-D Faris





### **Lapinology**

Irene de Watteville

California

12 x 16 x 3 inches

Low-fire ceramic, white slip, oxides

A sweet rabbit whispers in the ear of a lonely young lady the secrets of the Rabbit world, where life is not detestable - one can read, ride a bicycle, pick cherries, climb trees, do circus acts and even climb the moon. She is very lost, as one of her dear rabbits lies recuperating on a satin pillow after a tragic mishap of his severed ear. Will the Rabbitman à la Neptune come to console and court her?

–I. de Watteville



### **Descending from the Werkbund**

Shanna Fliegel

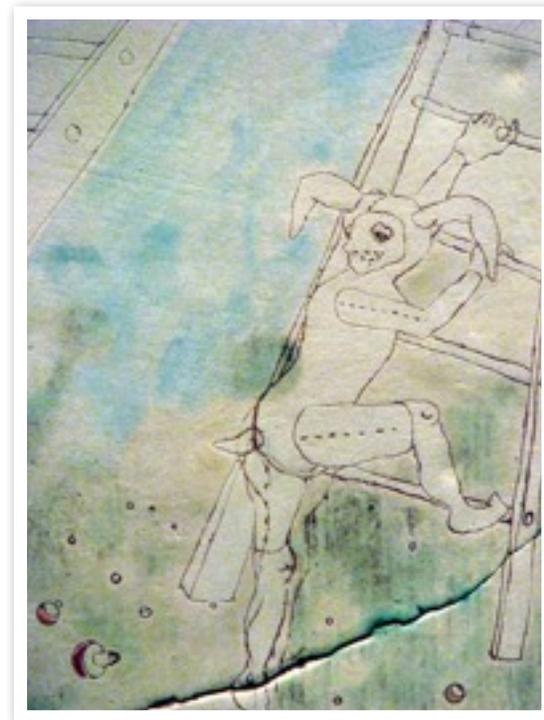
Oxford, NJ

17 x 14 x 1 inches

Low-fire ceramic

This piece tells the story of personal and global transition. The androgynous-rabbit figure has just completed a chapter in its life that marks a significant, yet difficult time of learning and creating. The figure assumes the role of the hare in costume as it descends and experiences a rebirth.

—S. Fliegel





**Jugglefish**

Mary Galligan  
 Devon, PA  
 12.5 x 10.75 x 0.05 inches  
 High-fire stoneware,  
 found objects, acrylic rods

One particularly dreary winter, the snow clouds were so thick that streetlights stayed on even in the daytime. My young daughter and I found refuge by visiting a large tropical fish exhibit. We imagined ourselves swimming in warm, turquoise water and being entertained by a talented, though elusive, Jugglefish. Our Jugglefish swims around the world performing impromptu shows for appreciative sea creatures. He prefers not to carry a valise so he juggles whatever is available where he finds himself at the time. Gentle, playful and resourceful, the Jugglefish is welcomed everywhere he goes. Then, just as quickly as he arrives, he flips his tail and is off to a new adventure.

–M. Galligan

**Onward**

Debra Fritts  
 Roswell, Georgia  
 8.25 x 8.25 x 3 inches  
 High-fire stoneware

In life, changes appear and gifts are given. Total awareness of the signs projected will enable choices to be made. New energies and experiences will bring excitement into the ordinary daily life. As we ( Frank and I) listen to the raven and the cardinal, we move and we go and we explore. Hello New Mexico!

–D. Fritts





### **Sixty-thousand Cowrie Shells**

Joan Gardiner  
Middleburg, VA  
34 x 25 x 8.5 inches  
Low-fire ceramic

I've been influenced by African art throughout my life: sculpture, masks, and head-dresses adorned with metal, feathers and cowrie shells. I thought I knew what I was looking at; bold forms and powerful symbols of a culture's spiritual life. I assumed they'd all be made of materials available in the artists' own environment. My eyes were opened on a trip to the Hamilton Plantation of Charleston, South Carolina, where a docent explained the bizarre, complex trade of rice, slaves, and cowrie shells. I was stunned to hear that humans were once bought for 60,000 of these shells.

To illustrate this commerce, I chose the Delft tile for its attractive familiarity. I wanted viewers to be fooled as I'd once been. Like me, they might think at first glance that a pleasurable or amusing narrative was in store. The ships in recessed bowls would seem to depict a pleasant pastime. But the purple manganese sides begin to reveal the realities, along with the heavy, rat-infested barrels containing the currency of an evil trade.

—J. Gardiner

## Ruby

Ashley Gray

Little Rock, AR

15.75 x 27.5 x 6 inches

Stoneware tiles, glaze, poplar frame



This portrait of Ruby was inspired by photographs from different decades of her life. The first picture was taken on Easter. She is four, and she looks bashfully at the camera while holding up her newly found egg. The second photo is one that was taken three years ago when Ruby was twenty-five. She is playing violin with a friend at a farmer's market in Baltimore where she now lives. I combined these photos to create an image that represents my perception of Ruby's character: playful, musical, and contemplative.

—A. Gray

## Captain Taft and the Red Drum

Shirley Gromen

Arlington, VA

20 x 24 x 1.5 inches

High-fire porcelain, mason stains, watercolor



Captain Taft Tippet piloted the Bay Queen on the Chesapeake Bay out of St. Jerome's Creek in Ridge, MD. Six to eight people signed up for full-day and depending on the time of year they caught bluefish, rockfish, red drum, croaker or even the occasional sand shark. My father and his cohorts were regulars on the Bay Queen. They booked every other Saturday from April 1 to November 30 and sometimes well into the new year. On this particular day in 1964 they found a school of 50-60 pound red drum, landing 5 of them before the day was over.

—S. Gromen



**Raven's Children**  
 Sandra Ure Griffin  
 Marengo, WI  
 13 x 25 x 0.5 inches  
 Porcelain

What does Raven the Creator think of humankind now? Stealers of secrets, spoilers of Eden, we've become Her problem children. With connections broken, kinships forgotten, we're fouling the nest that sustains us. Our fellow creatures plead with us to stop - to listen to their cries and to Raven.

-S.U. Griffin

**Capture-Flight-Destiny**  
 Sandra Ure Griffin  
 Marengo, WI  
 12 x 36 x 0.5 inches  
 Porcelain



Make your approach and announce your intention. Hold your breath and make your move: a launch! A leap into thin air! Unforeseen changes and choices arise... with surprising grace and finesse you right yourself and take charge. You befriend your fears and exhale in joy as the future opens before you!

-S.U. Griffin



**Woman with Fish**

Joan Rothchild Hardin

New York, NY

12 x 12 x 0.33 inches

Hand-painted ceramic tile

A glaze painting of a female nude seated on an orange surface next to fish swimming in blue water. She is relaxing in this peaceful spot, watching the movement of the fish under the clear water.

–J.R. Hardin

**Company of Women – Turquoise**

Joan Rothchild Hardin

New York, NY

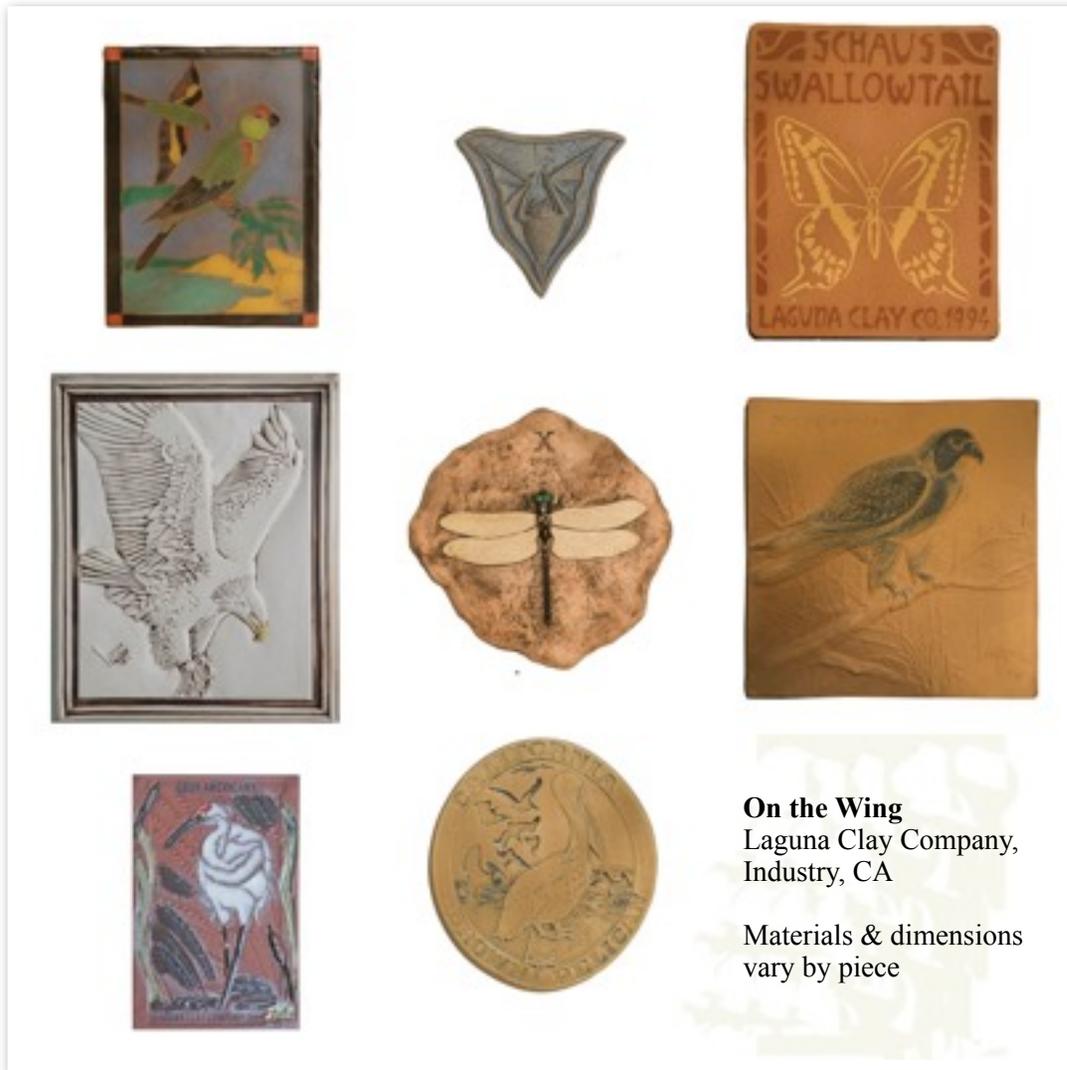
12 x 12 x 0.33 inches

Hand-painted ceramic tile

A glaze painting of three nude Caryatid-like women in a room with a tiled floor. They are friends. The occasion of their meeting is a bit mysterious. Perhaps they are taking a break from serving as architectural supports. Perhaps they are at a public bath.

–J.R. Hardin





**On the Wing**  
Laguna Clay Company,  
Industry, CA

Materials & dimensions  
vary by piece

**Top Row (from left to right):  
Schaus Swallowtail Butterfly**

Karen Patterson, Baldwin Park, CA  
Low-fire ceramic, glaze, stain wash

**Eastern Small-footed Bat**

Stephen and Kristin Powers, Keene, NH  
Low-fire ceramic

**Thick-Billed Parrot**

Diana Mausser, Baldwin Park, CA  
Materials

**Middle Row (from left to right):  
American Bald Eagle**

Janet Panozzo, CA  
Whiteware with grog

**Hines Emerald Dragonfly**

Karen Patterson, Baldwin Park, CA  
Low-fire ceramic, glaze, stain wash

**Peregrine Falcon**

Bob Shenfeld, Syracuse NY  
Cajun pressed high relief, rubbed stain

**Bottom Row (from left to right):  
Whooping Crane**

Julie Brooks, Industry, CA  
High-fire ceramic

**California Brown Pelican**

Jim & Sue Sullivan, Topanga, CA  
Low-fire ceramic

**On the Wing** is a small sampling from the Laguna Endangered Species Awareness Series conceived in 1992 by Jim Kassebaum, the General Manager of Laguna Clay Company. The series is at once a tale of great peril and great hope, told by many different artists' hands. It is also an exploration of the diverse potential of the ceramic tile. Find a digital version of the entire series at [www.lagunaclay.com](http://www.lagunaclay.com).

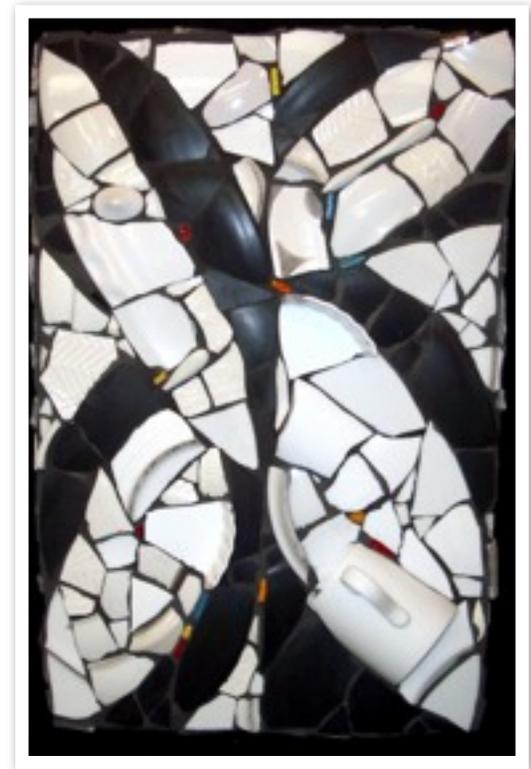


**Not Her Party**

Nicole Lemkemeier  
St. Louis, MO  
21.5 x 11.25 x 1 inches  
Low-fire ceramic, grout

A hot June day for a little girl at her best friend's birthday party. Presents, birthday cake, and attention are all for someone else even though it was her birthday just the week before. A photograph is snapped at a moment towards the end of the party when she is no longer able to keep a smile on her face through the heat and the envy. The back-lit and luminous midday sun creates a halo around the little girl's moment of consternation.

—N. Lemkemeier



**Genesis**

Bette Ann Libby  
Chestnut Hill, MA  
18 x 11 inches

Ceramic shards, cement board

This mosaic represents beginnings born from the creative process of restoring broken shards. This piece, in particular, represents the influence on my work of Isaac Luria, the 16th century Kabbalist and leader of mystics in Safed in the Middle East. According to Luria, balance is restored at creation, which he defined as the moment when divine powers were poured into vessels. After breaking apart, these vessels caused sparks of light and holiness to mix with impure matter. Mosaic shards represent these sparks of holiness. Hence, mosaics are the restoration of balance and a pathway to healing the world.

—B. A. Libby

### **Hanging Out #1**

Jennifer D. Martin

Philadelphia, PA

8 x 19 x 1 inches

Low-fire ceramic, modeling clay, sterling silver wire



This piece contrasts bone white, air-hardening sculpting material against grainy black stoneware, spotted with white grog. The gestured figures are strung together with sterling silver wire. The tile acts as a stage for the abstract figures, which are bound together but still capable of motion along their tether. Each form represents a soul as a unique individual. They are each sharing a common experience of pain and suffering within the human condition.

On one's physical body we know that scars and imperfections mark moments in our lives and can trigger memory of those moments. Whether or not these experiences are positive or negative, I am interested in embracing and celebrating the marks left behind as one progresses through life. This piece is a departure from most of my work, which is a figurative exploration of movement and life. It takes a look at the darker side of human emotion and experience.

-J. Martin



### **Shalom Chaim**

Ali Mirsky

Ashton, MD

36 x 28 x 4 inches

High-fire ceramic, shells, coral

Inspired by the concept of a "Tree of Life," I created this mosaic using found shell fragments and coral gathered from hours of walking the beach and many many sections of handmade ceramic pieces that I hand-formed and glazed.

-A. Mirsky



**Four Seasons**

Katia McGuirk

Doylestown, PA

28 x 28 x 4.5 inches

Low-fire ceramic, cement

This piece represents the revolving wheel of life through a menagerie of season animals. Throughout our evolution, we cycle through changes, maintaining our center of balance and sense of belonging. There is only our vital and loving relationship to life and death. It is a continuum with no beginning and no end.

-K. McGuirk



**Horse Branch**

Paul McMullan  
Keene, NH  
12 x 24 x 2 inches  
Low-fire ceramic

Horse Branch is about having access to everything and still feeling the struggle to survive.

-P. McMullan



**Dog Boy**

Paul McMullan  
Keene, NH  
12 x 24 x 2 inches  
Low-fire ceramic

Dog Boy is about a moment in my brain. A little girl feeds a rabbit while the whales and turtles play. Chemistry is brewing and the master dog drinks.

-P. McMullan

**Beyond the Deep**

Brizaida Medina-Vega

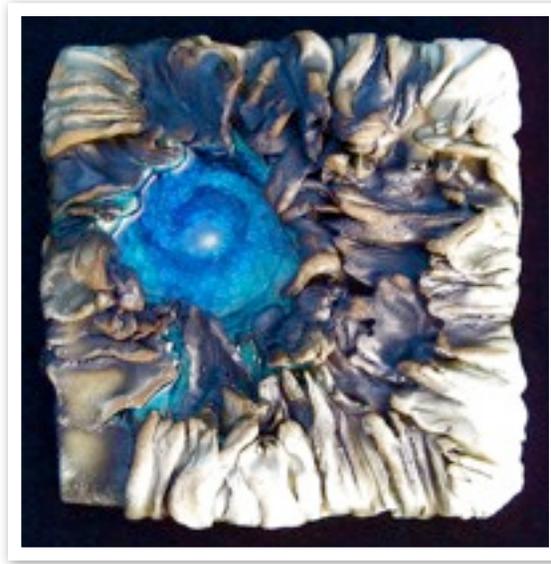
Evansville, IN

14 x 14 x 4 inches

Low-fire ceramic, oxides, and glass

“Electric lights create shadows, highlight heights, sharp contrast of gold, brown, red, black, white, concrete steps, stones, rails.”

–Based on the verse of poem "Visiting the Cave of Pech-Merle"



**Blue Receptacle**

Brizaida Medina-Vega

Evansville, IN

6.25 x 6.25 x 3 inches

Low-fire ceramic, oxide, glaze, and glass

"I approached to the open bay blue receptacle bristlist with latencies on the shore layed and unperturbed passes ice blocks as white segment..."

–Based on the verse of poem "Antarctic Verses" by Delia Musso

**Wind Blowing**

Brizaida Medina-Vega

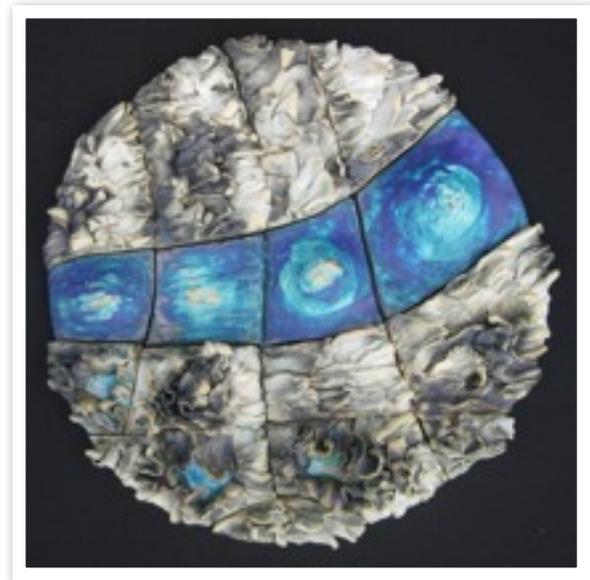
Evansville, IN

14 x 14 x 3 inches

Low-fire ceramic, oxides, glaze, and glass

"As the wind blowing making the waves neither ropes nor tails..."

–Based on the verse of poem "The Beauty of Antarctic Nature" by Carlos Madina Sandoval





### **Moon the Bear and the Hunter Birds**

Edwin R. Mighell, Jr.  
Anchorage, AK

12 x 12 x 0.5 inches  
Hand-molded ceramic tile

Moon, the bear, is the cup part of the big dipper, and the three hunting birds: robin, chickadee, and grey jay are the handle. A group of hunting birds have given chase to Moon for some time and some of the birds have fallen out of the race, as they have dropped below the horizon by the time the birds catch up to Moon. Robin is the first to catch Moon and he does most of the messy work of cutting him up, and that is why robin's chest and the maple trees at that time of the year are red. Chickadee brings the cooking pot, and of course grey jay shows up after most of the work has been done. Moon's spirit goes and hibernates for the winter and comes out fresh next spring to begin the great chase once again.

—E.R. Mighell,





**The Arkansas Traveler: The Musical Squatter and His Friends**  
**The Moravian Pottery & Tile Works**  
Doylestown, PA  
12 x 16 inches and 12 x 12 inches  
Earthenware tiles, glaze

These tiles are a replica of Henry Chapman Mercer's famous "Arkansas Traveller" Fireplace in the Derk Residence of Doylestown, Pennsylvania. Originally completed in 1929, Mercer created a set of seven narrative tiles: *Lost in the Woods*, *The Log House*, *The Musical Squatter and his Friends*, *The Arkansas Traveller and his Question*, *The Turn of the Tune*, *The Demijon*, and *The Dry Spot*. Each tile represents part of a corresponding narrative about the "traveller," his journey and his interactions with others along his path, particularly a musical "squatter" at his dilapidated house. To learn more about Mercer and his tiles, visit The Moravian Pottery & Tile Works, Mercer's residence, Fonhill, and the Mercer Museum, all located in the "Mercer Mile" of Doylestown.

–Vance Koehler, Curator, MPTW



**The Secret of the Hidden Stars**

Margy O'Brien  
 Albuquerque, NM  
 16 x 16 x 1 inches  
 Cuerda seca, hand-painted ceramic tiles

A Native American legend of the Secret of the Hidden Stars: when Night Sky decides she needs more stars, she calls on Wind to shake the cottonwood trees releasing stars from the twigs where they have been waiting.

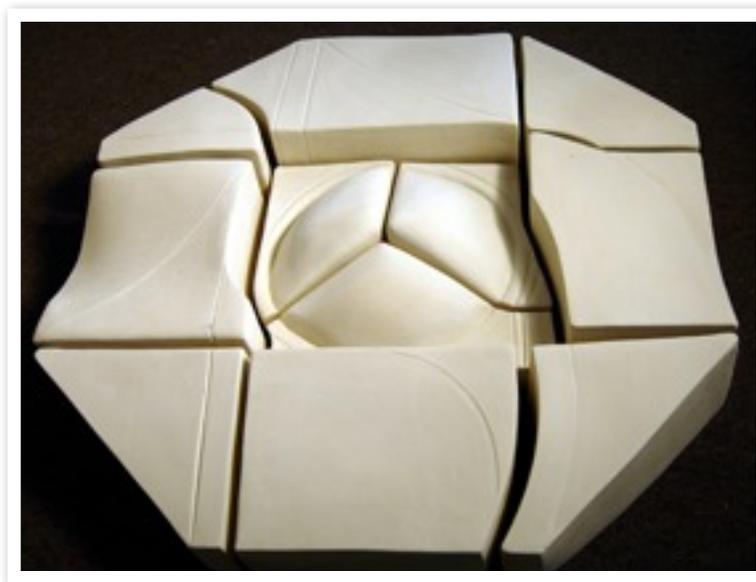
—M. O'Brien

**Earth Center**

Kat O'Brien  
 Champlain, NY  
 24 x 24 x 3 inches  
 High-fire ceramic, wood

The I Ching (Book of Change) is considered the oldest Chinese classic text. Like any good story, the deceptively simple octagon and 64 straight-line combinations has generated many commentaries and interpretations—a history of human social development, a creation story and natural principles, divination stories and methods. Still, the stories are always about the visual patterns. My tiles refer to the I Ching's octagonal grid but, although its sides are the same lengths, their component forms differ internally. The seed-like center poses ready to grow upward, but its story is of potential: Not Yet, and yet, Always Ready. When observers move around the outside, light and shape relationships shift inside. This octagon creates a moment from which to experience a story about Change that does not itself change.

—K. O'Brien





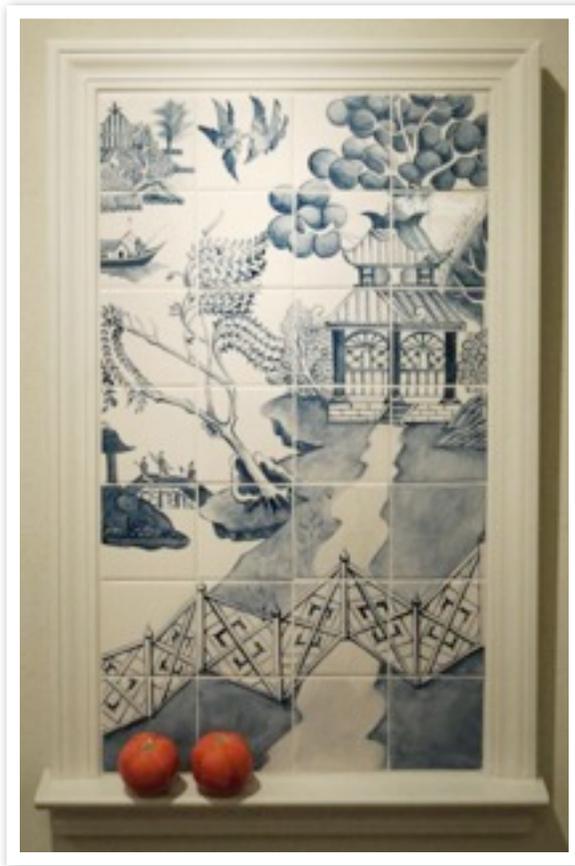
**Flossie and Rosie #1**  
Stephanie Osser  
Needham, MA  
13 x 9.5 x 1.25 inches  
High-fire ceramic  
Porcelain, slip, glaze

In 1924, the girl on the left was standing in front of a park in the Bronx, New York. Her parents were tailors, and they made her embroidered blouse and knickers with rickrack trim, worn with her store-bought, T-strap buckled shoes. Skip ahead to a family vacation 1987, and notice the girl in the foreground by chance was wearing an embroidered blouse and T-strap buckled shoes as well! She was joyously running with her homemade butterfly net, fabricated from a forked twig. Butterflies in monotonies and full color, flying back and forth through time, are connecting a moment of wonder and delight in these two girls, both exactly five years old, separated by two generations. These free-spirited children share beautiful singing voices and visual art talents. They both grow up to realize these talents as singers, painters, jewelry makers, etc. They are in reality Grandmother and Granddaughter, and I am, in fact, their proud and devoted Daughter/Mother storyteller.

–S. Osser



**Flossie and Rosie #2**  
Stephanie Osser  
Needham, MA  
13 x 9.5 x 1.25 inches  
Porcelain, slip, glaze



**Blue Willow Window**

Carrie Anne Parks

Alma, MI

34 x 22 x 4 inches

High-fire porcelain, low-fire earthenware, wood

This piece is part of a series of pieces commemorating the life I shared with my late husband on a small, mid-Michigan farm. Blue Willow is a traditional china pattern that is so well known, it is often used by scene designers to create images of "home." *Blue Willow* is also a love story.

– C.A. Parks



**Becoming**

Carol Shelkin

Drexel Hill, PA

11 x 14 x 1.5 inches

Handmade ceramic, unglazed porcelain, Mexican terra cotta, and glass tiles

Stained glass, fused and slumped glass

What makes you a “grown-up”? Could it be hitting a certain age? Is it moving out of your parents home? Does it have to do with having a relationship? Could it be your getting the first job? Are we “adult” after we finish our education? Do we instantly become grown up when we have our first-born child? Could it be when one accepts the status? What are the markers? Is it one single incident or clusters? What marks the point at which one shoulders all the predictions of being grown up? Are we caught up in the process of "Becoming"?

-C.Shelkin



**Prelude in the Park Community Mural 2009 Pacific Symphony** (a scaled presentation replica)

**Cha-Rie Tang, Janet Panozzo, Melanie Yarak, Jennifer Koons, and Julie Brooks**

Industry, CA

Bisqued low-fire tiles, glaze

10.5 x 26.5 x 1.5 inches

Once upon a time, five artists got together on a night full of beautiful music and created a work of art to last a lifetime. Collaged digital content from the Pacific Symphony was refined into Bezier line drawings. The resulting composition was translated to films and screened onto the tiles in black line. The tiles were transported to the site and with simple instruction and a great deal of enthusiasm, visitors began to glaze. Two exemplar tiles, displayed here, show how Frank Ticheli's compositions, 'Postcard' and 'Radiant Voices', were transformed into a joyful border by participants. The mural was completed as the sound of the Pacific Symphony washed over the summer night. In the green spaces outside the Oso Viejo Community Center in Mission Viejo, California, there now is a 3' by 9' mural made by the community.

–J. Brooks



### **Palissy Inspired Tile**

David Scott Smith  
Kalispell, MT  
19 x 14 x 3 inches  
Raku-fired ceramic

When I finally made my way to college, a professor told me my work was similar to Palissy's ("You should look him up," he said). When I reviewed the work of Bernard Palissy it was as if I were looking at a photo of a dead relative I'd never met, someone who looked just like me. I had a similar experience when I was first introduced to Gaudi's work. It was the first time I really realized a tile did not have to be square, and in fact there had been many artists in history who had worked with very sculptural, expressive tile. My definition of tile is constantly changing and expanding. But every so often, usually once a year or more, I create a tribute to Bernard Palissy.

—D.S. Smith

### **Baubles**

David Scott Smith  
Kalispell, MT  
36 x 25 x 7 inches  
High-fire porcelain, beeswax, plexiglass

Baubles is a compilation of things that entrance me and fascinate me--they are not only objects of beauty, they are precious, mysterious, even tragic. They are collections of imprints from family heirlooms, molds from animals found dead (the baby bird, still warm on the sidewalk), casts from lace and leaves, carved gems and jewels. How thick or thin the illuminated porcelain is animates each subtle nuance of the surface. The porcelain pieces 'grouted' with beeswax glow like some magical treasure--yet like discovered ancient treasure, they are also funerary in nature, relics or fossil impressions of a time and a place that no longer exists.

—D.S. Smith





### **Devil's Canoe**

Brian McArthur

Red Deer, Alberta

9 x 29 x 1.5 inches

Low-fire terracotta with oxidation glaze

“Chaise-Galerie, Devils Flying Canoe” is a Canadian folk story. Deep in the Quebec forest on New Years Eve, five lonely lumberjacks made a plan to travel 300 miles to a party. The only way to travel that far was to take the Devil’s Canoe. They had to make a pact with the Devil promising not to mention God’s name or touch holy objects. If the rule were broken, they would forfeit their souls. The desperate men got into the canoe and it began to rise above the trees as they paddled towards the party. The men quickly arrived and were soon caught up in the merriment. Soon it was late and they had to return back to camp before dawn or forfeit their souls. On the return flight, Baptiste, a particularly drunk lumberjack became unruly, swearing and rocking the boat out of control. The canoe hit a tree knocking all the men out into the snow. All the men were found safely except for Baptiste, who was never seen again.

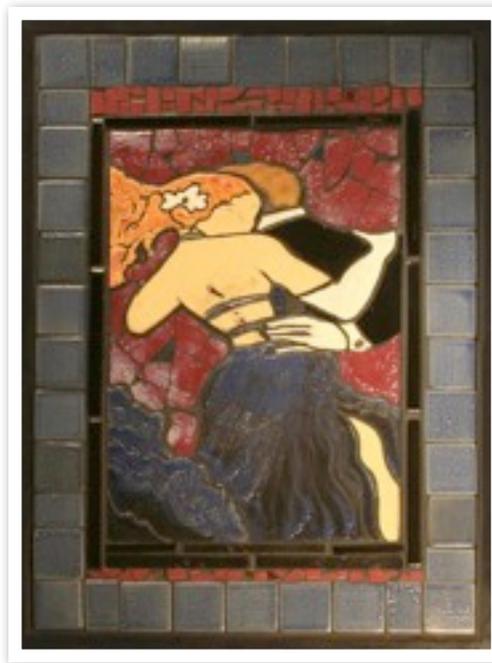
– B. McArthur



**Poe Evermore**

Olivia Spencer  
 Belcamp, MD  
 22 x 22 x 1 inches  
 Low-fire ceramic tile, mirror tile,  
 stone, glass

This mosaic was executed to mark the 200th year since the birth in 1809 of American poet Edgar Allan Poe. Ceramic tile, stone, glass, mirror and found objects are combined to mark the occasion of two centuries in which readers all over the world have enjoyed the work of this artist--hence the title, "Poe Evermore". -O. Spencer



**Over Her Shoulder**

Susan Springer  
 Ashland, OR  
 27.5 x 21.5 x 1.5 inches  
 Low-fire ceramic on panel, wooden frame

Surrounded by complexity, rich color and texture, she gazes over her shoulder, perhaps to another day, another dance partner, another life. By thinking of the past, she misses the present moment entirely. Is she thinking with regret of a missed opportunity while missing this opportunity as well?

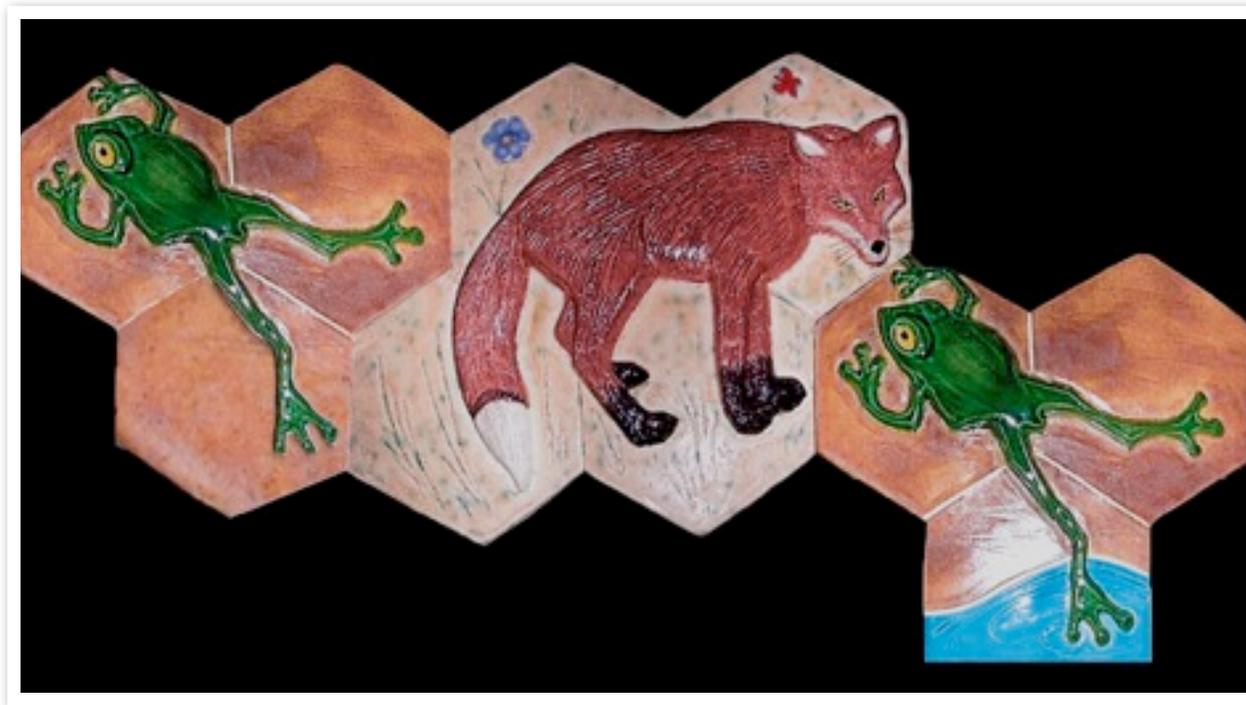
-S. Springer

**Green Satin**

Susan Springer  
 Ashland, OR  
 21 x 19 x 1 inches  
 Low-fire ceramic on panel, wooden frame

Finding themselves in a confined space, with the jeweled curtain just out of reach, the dancers strain to break free. The green satin gown is both flowing and limiting; the tuxedo becomes a frame for the female dancer. The dancers move together, then apart as they change partners and change lives.  
 -S. Springer





### **Leaping Beauty and the Foxy Prince**

Syma

New York, NY

8.5 x 10 x 1 inches

Low-fire ceramic, acupuncture needles

Once upon a time there lived a dancing princess known as 'Leaping Beauty.' She was very talented and, in her own way, very beautiful. One day, in the flower-filled meadow, she met a seductive fox who convinced her that he was a prince. She agreed to marry him, and she left her lily pad to live happily ever after with him, on the other side of the pond. It soon became clear that this fox was NOT a prince. In fact he often used his whiskers, not to tickle her fancy, but instead to burst her bubbles. Leaping Beauty awoke to the reality that this fox was killing her dreams and was going to eat her alive. And so with tears in her eyes and holes in her heart, she puffed herself up, and gave a mighty 'ribbit.' Leaping away from the fox, she danced off on her own four feet into the sunset.

-Syma



**All Things Are Possible**  
Linda Witkowski  
Indianapolis, IN  
21 x 28 inches  
High-fire ceramic

My nephew would draw pictures depicting his favorite heroes and scenes. This art tile captures that moment when, with a crayon in hand, he is just starting to render his imaginative thoughts – the castle, king and knights - on the blank paper before him. The question is raised: From what sources does the boy (or any of us) draw from to artistically express an idea? The tiled frame explores several possible sources for inspiration which can be seen in the I Ching: symbols for heaven and earth, the sun, moon and stars overlapped with the Greek letters “Α” and “Ω” (alpha and omega) symbolizing God, the universe or the beginning and the end. Other sources for creativity are shown, symbolized through the four elements: earth, wind, fire and water. Amid all of these possibilities the source for inspiration and creativity awaits. Therefore, with crayon in hand and a blank piece of paper up front, dare to create because from this premise all things are possible!

–L. Witkowski



### **Boy at Pool**

Matthew Yanchuk  
New York, NY  
17 x 11 x 1  
Low-fire ceramic

In the water Lawrence was fantastic, almost like he was made to be in it rather than walking awkwardly around on two legs. He could cut through the pool with smooth pulls, though no one had ever taught him. He could outpace the swim team. In the water he could feel the eyes of the girls on him, some boys too. More than once he'd caught the lifeguard staring.

"Oh my gosh, Marty! Get a load of Larry's swim trunks! He's like Burt--what's his name?--Lancaster! Just like Burt Lancaster." His mother's shriek caused Lawrence's stomach to knot. He tried to duck away but couldn't. His mother's bright muumuu shouted from the deckchair. Beside her was his father in khaki shorts and black socks. Lawrence smelled her cigarette, with its ever-growing ash; daring gravity, it peeked out from under her visor. His father yelled back, something about Burt Lancaster and the kind of men who swim. Lawrence felt the moment the girls stopped looking at him and stared at his parents. He heard the first rise of laughter from the lifeguard. A new pool. Fairfield had a pool.

– M. Yanchuk



### **Mark Knees**

Matthew Yanchuk  
New York, NY  
11 x 11 x 1 inches  
Low-fire ceramic

At the barbecue he had watched Laura all afternoon. She was tagging along after some of the older boys. She laughed a lot and he thought it looked like singing. Mark was short, an oddity amongst his family. He was forever getting lost in photos, just a fuzzy tuft of hair peeking out from behind Brett's shoulder or Teddy's arm. That was him, the cutoff head, the face skirting the edge of the frame.

When Mrs. French gathered everyone up for a group photo, Laura scrambled down in front. Brett looped an arm around Laura, the next-door neighbor, the girl with the nicest neck that Mark had ever seen. He couldn't stand it. He grabbed on to Laura's legs, because she had the best knees. At least this way she would know he was there, holding on to her. Maybe if he held her knees tight enough, or if he smiled enough, laughed enough, was around her enough...

– M. Yanchuk

**Her Ears**

Isaiah Zagar  
Philadelphia, PA  
25 x 14 inches  
Mixed media, grout



**Her Lips**

Isaiah Zagar  
Philadelphia, PA  
26 x 14 inches  
Mixed media, grout

I have always been fascinated by reflections in glass mirrors, shards, pieces of \_\_\_\_\_. And eyes and ears and lips - especially her eyes, her ears, her lips.

-I. Zagar

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## Acknowledgments

Ellen Owens of Philadelphia's Magic Gardens and Sheila Menzies of the Tile Heritage Foundation, the producers and hosts of *Tell-Tale Tiles & Fractured Fantasies*, would like to pay special tribute to all who have made this extraordinary exhibition an overwhelming success.

First, we thank the staff and volunteers of both hosting organizations, Tile Heritage and Philadelphia's Magic Gardens, who from the initial conception meticulously constructed this exhibition together detail by detail, piece by piece. Second, be honor and appreciate all the participating artists, those whose work was juried into the show also to those who submitted to our Call for Entry. Finally, we recognize Juried Art Services, the organization that managed the reception of all the entries, and to Susan Tunick, our distinguished juror, whose critical eye and artistic judgment resulted in the exhibition's chosen works.

To sustain this effort over these many months, there must be underwriters, companies that foresaw the importance of this exhibition and could incorporate our vision into their own. To them all, from coast to coast, we owe special thanks to: LATICRETE International, Inc., the "Exhibition Hosting Sponsor"; AMACO; Ed Pawlack Tile, Inc.; Laguna Clay Company; the Moravian Pottery and Tile Works; NCECA; NS Ceramic, Inc.; Paragon Industries, L.P.; Solar Antique Tiles; Supper restaurant; The Chicago Mosaic School, the very first to come on board; and The Clay Studio, Philadelphia.

In addition, there are a handful of extra special individuals whose expressed enthusiasm has served as a propellant, especially during some of our more challenging moments. Our heartfelt thanks to Karen Ami, Julie Brooks, Irene de Watteville, Diana Faris, Jeff Guido, Arnold Howard, Vance Koehler, Pedro Leitao, Katia McGuirk & her assistants, Ed Metcalf, Ellen Owens, Ed Pawlack, Mitch and Jennifer Prensky, Nancie Mills Pipgras, Edward Solomon, Nola Stucky, Joe Taylor, Amy Vlastelica, Brechelle Ware, Julia Zagar and Elaine Zimmerman.

And finally, behind every successful exhibition there are the sources of inspiration, and we would like to recognize the spirit of Henry Chapman Mercer, who since well before his death 80 years ago has moved thousands of artists to work their hands into clay; and to our dear friend Isaiah Zagar, still very much alive, whose sprightly life works have similarly exhilarated many to piece together their souls with mosaic.

To all, with our sincerest thanks

Sheila Menzies and Ellen Owens

The majority of the art works in this virtual exhibition and catalog are available for purchase prior to April 19, 2010. For a price list and availability contact Philadelphia's Magic Gardens Gallery: [info@philadelphiasmagicgardens.org](mailto:info@philadelphiasmagicgardens.org) or (215) 733 0390

