Mosaic Technique: A Versatile Approach to Stained Glass

The many possibilities that Mosaic offers the glass world should have you jumping for joy. In stained glass, Mosaic is not a design style, it is a method of fabrication. And because this wonderful technique allows you to adhere glass to so many forms, learning how to use it effectively can open up a multitude of creative opportunities for the glass enthusiast. Imagine the tabletops, mirror frames, bird baths, glass containers, terra cotta planters and planters — even a fireplace — transformed under your creative direction! With Mosaic, your love of glass can take you down many exciting and varied avenues.

What’s more, Mosaic takes less time than traditional stained glass. There’s no foiling. No cutting and stretching lead. No soldering. No putting. No patina. So... just for fun, leave your solder, flux, lead, and foil on the shelf. Instead pick up an appropriate adhesive and some common tile grout and give Mosaic a try. Is this blasphemy? Are we berating lead or copper? Of course not! We just think that Mosaic has a unique and important role in stained glass fabrication and we want to encourage you to experiment!

Let’s start with wall art. Any stained glass panel can be fabricated as a Mosaic — you just need a base to mount it on. Plywood works great. Remember too, without transmitted light, you’ll be selecting glass for it’s reflective qualities. This is a bit of a different discipline — more like painting — but the results can be stunning. (See the pieces by Eva Marie Volkmann on page 2.) With the world of walls now wide open, you’re no longer limited to window space to display panels.

But the really inspirational thing about Mosaic is that it can take your glass art quickly and easily into a 3-dimensional world. Almost anything can serve as a project base. Our friend, Christine Stewart, Mosaic artist and author from Australia, offers some wonderful pattern books (published by CKE). Her books are filled with designs and tips that turn everyday terra cotta pots and planters into works of art. Under her expert instruction you may not be able to stop with the garden-variety materials. She’s been known to cover bisque teapots, raw marble or stone, mirror frames, and more with her playful designs.

Yard sales and flea markets can be great places to find unexpected canvases for Mosaic. An interesting box, a cast-off table or dresser, a piece of sculpture, or a birdbhouse, can start the wheels of your imagination turning — for a minimal financial investment. Glass choice depends on the treasure you choose...
to adorn with Mosaic. An opaque base will always require reflective glass. But if you have a clear base to work with, such as a glass tabletop, lantern, or other glass container, your full palette of color – including transparent choices – is, once again, available. When working with transparent glass, you’ll want to use a clear adhesive (many artists swear by silicone) to preserve the translucency.

There are many, many books available on Mosaic that can inspire and instruct you along this path. This spring why not pick one up and expand your glass art repertoire. (Garden art lends itself especially well to the Mosaic technique!) Explore … have fun… create something wonderful!
Going Green in the Great Outdoors

Springtime marks our annual exodus into our gardens, patios, decks, and backyards; and it’s the time we begin thinking of ways to spruce up those areas. Over the years, we’ve offered many ideas to help you take glass into the out of doors, but this time, we’ve uncovered a way for you to “go green” in the process! Karen Seymour, of Seattle WA, has just released a pattern book called “Garden Light” (CKE distribution) that features solar powered lanterns and garden accents. These projects will brighten your garden — day and night — using only the sun’s energy.

Karen Seymour entered the world of art glass by creating a table for her own patio about ten years ago. Since then, she’s found herself a wonderful niche designing pieces and patterns for outdoor areas — and converting gardeners into glass artists! Karen found that when she displayed her work at garden and flower shows, the attending gardeners asked about learning to make glass art of their own. Karen saw her opportunity and began to teach glass classes at nurseries in her area and, in 2004, self-published her first book of patterns. “Garden Light” is Karen’s second publication, and like the first, includes extra instruction and a CD of patterns geared toward the non-glass initiated — as well as this new twist on lighting.

Sure, YOU know your way around glass — but what about installing the solar panels? You can insert ready-made products or use the careful step-by-step instruction and wiring schematics included in the book to build your own circuitry. (Or perhaps you know someone willing to take on the left brain aspect while you tackle the right brain areas?) Either way, your garden art will be glowing in no time. This is a great way to beautify the world while being kind to the earth. Thanks Karen!

Advancing Your Art Glass Skills

Don’t limit yourself! Why confine your artistic expression to familiar techniques when there are so many opportunities available to expand your horizons? Best of all, many glass techniques are being taught — virtually down the street — at your local Art Glass Retailer.

Whether you’re interested in improving your glass cutting and soldering skills, or learning something entirely new, most stained glass retailers offer much more than just stained glass supplies. Classes are generally offered in beginning through advanced levels and typically cover a range of topics. Here are just a few of the possibilities you might want to explore further:

- Sand Blast Etching
- Window Installations
- Glass Blowing
- Lamp/Torch Working
- Copper Foil Techniques
- Soldering Techniques
- Mosaics
- Stained Glass Repair
- Hand Beveling
- 3-D Projects
- Tiffany Lamp Making
- Glass Cabinet Doors

Contact your local Art Glass Supplier and ask for a class schedule. There are often same-day workshops available — only a few hours on a single day — requiring less of a time/fee commitment. Not finding what you’re looking for? Tell them what you’re interested in. They can’t help if you don’t speak up!

If you don’t happen to live near an Art Glass Retailer offering the particular specialty you’re interested in, try a little research. Investigate classes through glass shows (such as Glass Craft & Bead EXPO), check your community college, or websites of admired glass professionals who may also teach. If you run out of classroom options, there are many tutorials available on DVD or VHS that can get you started as well.

There’s a whole world of exciting glass techniques and art glass applications out there for you to explore. Be brave, be bold and most of all…be creative!
New Transparents: Subtle Shifts in Color

In most art forms, subtlety leads to complexity and sophistication. Recognizing that principle, Spectrum has recently sought to provide options in your Transparent palette for incremental shifts in color – giving you a broader range with a greater possibility for nuance. Four of our newest offerings have all been modifications of existing colors rather than completely new ones. These new options for subtle shading and color gradation allow you to add a level of sophistication to your work.

These four new Transparent color variations are pictured and described below. (Remember to download The SCORE online to see these in color.) Enjoy!

- **Light Steel Blue**: The rich Steel shade you've always loved, just less intense.
- **Light Amber**: This Golden-toned step closes the gap between Pale and Medium Amber.
- **Light Grape**: Regal, luscious Grape is taken a bit lighter and brighter.
- **Antique Bronze**: A slightly darker and warmer neutral Brown choice.

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**Aventurine Blue!**

Dazzling new Blue joins the System 96 Aventurine family!

Peer into the depths of the icy, blue-black, galaxy of metallic flake. It’s riveting…intense…elegant.

Stock #138AVSF
**Bubble Basics**

Glass Cutting: **simple straight cuts**

Firing: **contour fuse**

Trapped bubbles add a unique interest to a project!

1. Cut 2 equal squares of a Clear textured glass. (100CSF Chord or 100RSF Ripple). Lay the first square on Kiln Shelf Paper, **texture side up**.

2. Lay the second square on top of the first, **texture side down**. Turn the second square 90° so that the texture grains “crisscross.”

3. Decorate any way you choose & fuse. We used Pebbles, Chips, and Stringer. We Contour Fused (1425º for a 5 minute hold).

Large bubbles are created with Ripple, smaller ones with Chord. Frits and paints can be used to fill in or accentuate the textures as shown here in experimental tiles by Janet Zambai.
This Spectrum Pattern of the Month comes from the book “Crosses” published by Mari Stein.

See your local retailer for this free pattern or to purchase the book.

Spectrum Glass Suggestions
A. 201-61S Ivory Opalescent
B. 451-20W Red/Amber Waterglass®
C. 422-1W Olive/Sea Green Waterglass
D. 110.8W Medium Amber Waterglass
This Spectrum Pattern of the Month comes from the book “It’s All About Roses” published by Terra Parma.

See your local retailer for this free pattern or to purchase the book.

Spectrum Glass Suggestions
A. 591-1W Champagne Waterglass®
B. 528-1W Sea Green Waterglass
C. BR/Champ. Champagne/Clear Baroque
D. 180.8W Pale Gray Waterglass

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This Spectrum Pattern of the Month comes from the book “A Dog Show in Stained Glass” by Bob Schneider.

See your local retailer for this free pattern or to purchase the book.

**Spectrum Glass Suggestions**

A. 367-1S  Yellow/ White
B. 357-1S  Cherry Red/ White

Note: the night light hardware can be found at your supplier.