



E-NEWS FROM TILE HERITAGE

November  **2005**



**American Swedish Institute,
Minneapolis, Minnesota.**

Mark Your Calendar!

The **Handmade Tile Association** and the **Tile Heritage Foundation** are presenting a 4-day conference in Minneapolis, **September 13-16, 2006**, consisting of lectures, tours and a one-day tile festival and sale at the American Swedish Institute on Saturday, the 16th. Similar to the Tile Heritage symposiums of former years, the emphasis will be on bringing the tile community together. The event will offer optional activities, limited in size, that attendees will register for in advance. Both the topics and tour sites will be different from the "Tiles in the Twin Cities" symposium in 2002. Watch for further details in the coming months.

Open Invitation to Teach: "Keeping the Craft Alive" in 2006 or 2007!

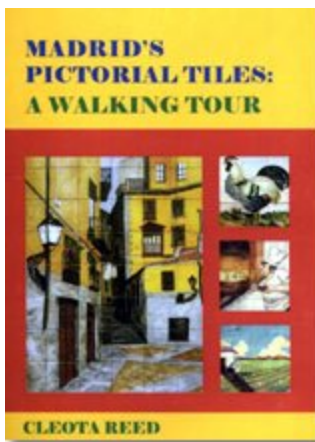
We're calling on tile makers, tile painters, mold makers, architectural ceramists and mosaic artists who enjoy teaching and sharing their expertise. For the past 6 years throughout the U.S. many dedicated artisans have been offering opportunities for people to enhance their experience with clay and mosaic. Under the auspices of **"Keeping the Craft Alive,"** presented by the Tile Heritage Foundation, you can participate right in your own studio, offering your expertise to your own community! To find out more please email

foundation@tileheritage.org or call 707 431-8453 by November 25th to express your interest. Details are available from **Sheila Menzies**, KCA Coordinator.

Few things are more personally fulfilling than sharing.



**Sarah Chamberlin at the "Magical Majolica"
workshop in Solana Beach, 2005.**

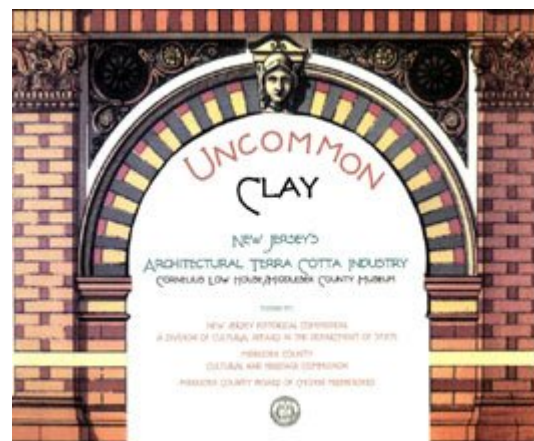


New Books

Cleota Reed, author, scholar, and tile historian extraordinaire, has produced a handsome, conveniently small booklet of tile sites in Spain's capital city. Featuring numerous pictures in full color, *Madrid's Pictorial Tiles: A Walking Tour* includes a map of the city and maps of two specific walks within its 50 pages. For more details write to Cleota, cleotar@earthlink.net. At the moment she's seeking a publisher!

Some months ago we featured in "E-News" a publication titled *Uncommon Clay: New Jersey's Architectural Terra Cotta Industry*. Susan Kittredge, Assistant Director of the Cultural and Heritage Commission of Middlesex County that published the book, wrote

to Tile Heritage that the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) had selected this book as an award winner in 2005. The AASLH Awards Program is the nation's most prestigious competition for recognition of achievement in state and local history. Thanks to the generosity of **Susan Tunick** at **Friends of Terra Cotta**, who wrote the Preface to the book, we have a limited number of copies of this book available to THF members at no cost. Simply email us a note, foundation@tileheritage.org, and we will send you a copy.



Joe Taylor, James Dick, founder and artistic director at The International Festival-Institute, and Richard Royall, managing director of the Institute.

Round Top, where? TEXAS!

In mid-September **Sheila Menzies** and **Joe Taylor** flew to Texas to take part in the 19th annual Library and Museum Collections Forum, this one titled "**The Art and Craft of Clay: American Pottery & Tiles**," presented by the **International Festival-Institute at Round Top**, in the rolling hills halfway between Austin and Houston. Joe lectured on historic California tiles and was accompanied by **Jessie Poesch**, professor emeritus at Tulane University who spoke on Newcomb pottery; **Susan Frost**, the leading authority on San Jose tiles and pottery; and **Cheryl Robertson**, independent scholar and consultant, who served as moderator and spoke on the Japanese influence on American art

pottery. Roughly 80 people were in attendance. The International Festival-Institute is the creation of **James Dick**, its artistic director. A graduate of the University of Texas at Austin, James has spent a career as a touring concert pianist, and he wanted to create a summer institute like those in Europe that would provide a setting for young, gifted musicians to study and perform. He founded the campus, called **Festival Hill**, in 1974 and set it among the gentle swells of pastures near Round Top, a town of 81 people in Fayette County. The 1,100-seat **Festival Concert Hall** serves as the focal point of the 200-acre campus devoted to classical music. See www.festivalhill.org.



Festival Concert Hall at Festival Hill, Round Top, Texas.



Donna Billick wonders where all these people have come from!

Putting a Face on Petaluma

“Faces of Petaluma” will ultimately provide this northern California community with handmade clay images of its own citizens, decorating a fountain in the central downtown area. Promoted by the local Chamber of Commerce and sponsored by the **Petaluma Arts Council** and local businesses, the project is headed by ceramic artist **Donna Billick** of Davis, who on a weekend in late September was overwhelmed by the hoards of people, young and old alike, who arrived to carve their faces in clay.

By 1 p.m. on the first day, the 300 slabs of clay brought by the artist were claimed; people were turned away and asked to come back the next day. Most, however, stood around watching others work. Many of these had mirrors and were busily sculpting the details of what they saw. Once each face was complete glazes were applied. By Sunday afternoon over 1200 people had produced self-portraits! This amounted to 1-½ tons of clay.

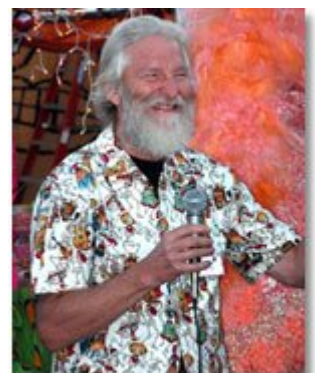
At the end of the day the faces were carefully placed in trays and loaded into the artist’s van to be ferried to Davis for firing. At some point next year they’ll all be brought back and installed, putting a new face, as it were, on downtown Petaluma.



Laurel True at left, surrounded by her guardian angels, addresses the crowd at the opening of the Institute of Mosaic Art.

IMA Opens with a Flourish of Color and Sound

The **Institute of Mosaic Art (IMA)** in Oakland, California held its grand opening celebration on September 24th complete with outrageous costumes, a band from Ghana, and numerous celebrities. Mosaic artist **Laurel True**, the heart and soul of the new Institute, was first inspired when she apprenticed with master mosaicist, **Isaiah Zagar** of Philadelphia. For over a dozen years since then Laurel has been teaching as well as being engaged in both privately commissioned mosaic artwork and community projects in the U.S. and in Ghana.



Isaiah Zagar, master mosaicist.



Mosaic masterpiece being grouted at IMA under the leadership of Isaiah Zagar, Sept. 05.

Both **Isaiah Zagar** and **Donna Billick** were present, each holding week-long workshops. Donna focused on the production of monumental mosaic sculptures while Isaiah directed a group in the creation of a large-scale mosaic mural on the Institute's façade using primarily broken tiles and a string of mirrors, the trade mark of his craft.

IMA offers classes, workshops, ongoing exhibitions of mosaic art and serves as a supply house for mosaic materials as well.

IMA is a designated “tile joint,” authorized as such by the **Tile Heritage Foundation**, a place where tile enthusiasts can stop by and browse through a wide assortment of books on tiles and mosaics in its resource library. Back issues of **Tile Heritage publications** are available to read through, and **self-guided tile and mosaic tours** of Bay Area sites are available for purchase.

Visit www.instituteofmosaicart.com. It's a dream come “true.”



Sheila Menzies contemplates the weighty mosaic crown by Berkeley artist Carol Bevilacqua at the opening of IMA.



Diana Watson, Native Tile & Ceramics, with Nawal Motawi, Motawi Tileworks.

“Inside Tile”: the THF Silent Auction

Nothing feels better than to salute a job well done! “**Inside Tile: Tools, Traditions, Techniques**,” in Pomona, California, October 6-9, provided the perfect venue for tile artists and artisans to get together with educators and to share their knowledge and expertise. There was such enthusiasm generated by the people who were there, those from the local area and those

who had traveled many miles to join with their colleagues for both fun and education.

Our hats are flying sky high with acclamations for **Stephani Stephenson** from Revival Tileworks, the principal organizer of the conference, to **Danielle McIntosh** from the Potters Council for her logistical expertise, to



From left: tile makers Laird Plumleigh, Karim Motawi and Richard Keit.

Cybele Garcia at the Pomona Downtown Center for hosting this crazy group, to **Christy Johnson**, director of AMOCA, for mounting an unforgettable exhibition of over 400 historic and contemporary tiles; to **Norman Karlson** for lending the historic tiles and for treating us all to his splendid oratory, to the numerous other presenters for sharing their knowledge and, really, to all who attended this marvelous 4-day event.



The silent tile auction on display at the Pomona Downtown Center.

over \$4000 at the close, which we have since shared, as promised, with the **American Museum of Ceramic Art**, the **California Heritage Museum** and the **Malibu Lagoon Museum**. We are most grateful for everyone's participation.

The **silent auction** of tiles, presented by the **Tile Heritage Foundation**, turned out to be the most successful single event of its kind in more than 15 years of our presenting similar activities. There were 121 tiles on display, all donated by artists and artisans throughout the U.S. and Canada. 109 of these were bid on and sold, most at or above the stated retail. Amazingly, we took in



One of eight tables with tiles up for grabs! Note the bid card with each tile.