



Tile Heritage Foundation

for research and preservation of ceramic surfaces

Founded in July 1987 Tile Heritage celebrates its 28th anniversary this year. Supporters like YOU... members, major contributors, industry sponsors, generous grantors... everyone... have made possible the continued fulfillment of the Foundation's mission to Document and Preserve tile history in the U.S., both past and present. THANK YOU!

E-News for Summer 2015

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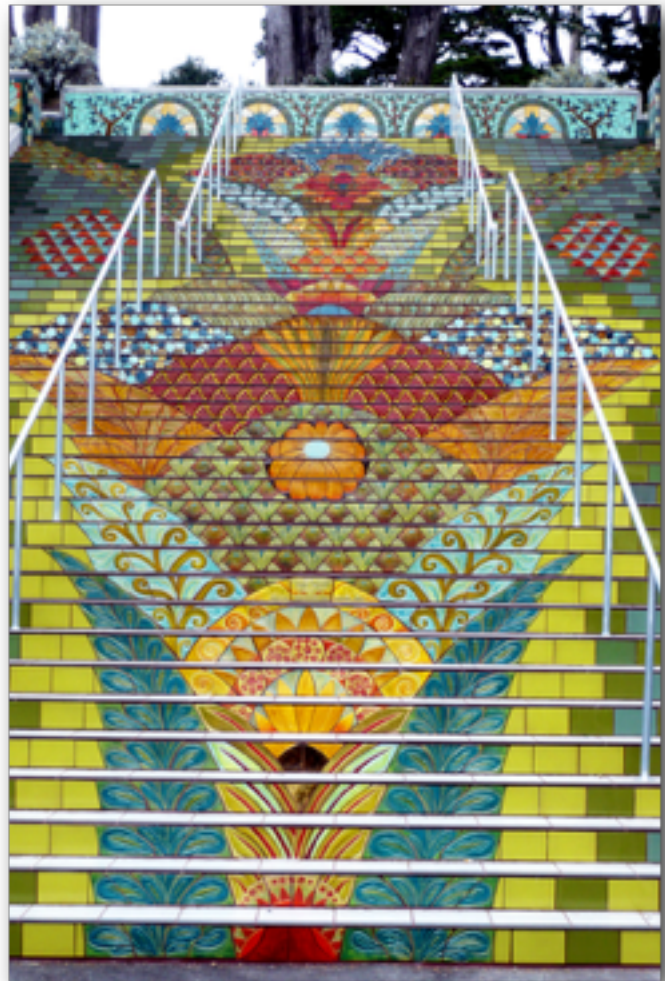
TCNA Provides Advantages

Tiling a San Francisco Hillside

by Richard Mohr

May 28, 2015 saw the dedication of this grand art tile installation on the stairs at the end of California Street beyond 32nd Avenue in San Francisco's Outer Richmond district where the street crashes into Lincoln Park just below the Palace of the Legion of Honor. The installation was designed by Éire-born

Aileen Barr, who also hand-crafted the installation's decorated tiles and earlier had completed several other SF tiled staircases. The undecorated tiles are by **Fireclay Tile Company** and **Heath Ceramics**, both of San Francisco; **Dal-Tile** supplied the treads. All the tiles were installed up the staircase's 52 thirty-foot-wide steps by **Riley Doty** and **Phylece Snyder**. The driving force behind the project, ten years in the making, was **The Friends of Lincoln Park**. The total cost of the project, including extensive restoration work to the original WWI-era concrete stairs, came to half-a-million dollars.



Lincoln Park, San Francisco. Photo by Robert W. Switzer.

More About the Steps at Lincoln Park

From Phylece Snyder, Snyder Tile Co., Oakland, California

“Riley Doty and I were equal partners in the installation of the steps. He, however, was the initial contact with Aileen Barr. I probably installed more of the tile but Riley did more of the very grueling prep work. From the very beginning we collaborated on every aspect of the job; we were both there for every insane minute from inception to completion. We're never in charge of each other - just arguers, I mean COLLABORATORS in all the work. We team up for many projects.

“Riley and I spent 4 months (!) out in the cold and rain installing all the risers, benches and pillars on this absolutely magnificent public/private art project.



From the top down, Phylece Snyder at work on the Lincoln Park Steps.



Awaiting the treads, Aileen Barr (left) and Phylece celebrate.

“The artist, Aileen Barr, designed and hand made all the art tile which took her most of a year. She worked by our side the entire time to make sure it was installed exactly as she imagined it. Riley did most of the cutting in while I was privileged to install at least 90% of the art tile.

The bench at the top was done by all of us 4 years ago.” (See “E-News for Fall 2011”).

The Lincoln Park Steps are located in San Francisco at the west end of California St. at 32nd Ave. near the Legion of Honor.

All pictures courtesy of Phylece Snyder and Riley Doty.

Still More About the Steps

From Riley Doty, Doty Tile Co.,
Oakland, California

"The original stairs date from at least 1919 and were heavy concrete construction built onto the side of a sand dune. Every time it rains heavily new gullies are created in the sandy soil of the hillside. I would have assumed the sand beneath the stairway would have been undercut long ago and the stairs gotten all catawampous. But for some reason it has remained incredibly stable.

"I should say something about the methods and materials. The biggest single thing I'd stress is the use of Schluter Ditra matting. All tread and riser tiles were set onto Ditra, the most brilliant, innovative product introduced during the period of years I've been installing tile. When the architect, Jim Westover, and representatives from the city first assessed the existing stairs I made the use of Ditra a requirement because it offers the degree of crack bridging that I trust.



Riley Doty installing Schluter Ditra matting.



Aileen Barr aligns a riser design above with the riser below.

"Our contract was with San Francisco Parks Alliance, and we were the art tile installers. Cogent Construction & Consulting had the contract with the city Department of Public Works to install the tread tiles and the landings. 12" x 12" Dal porcelain tiles were used for the landings and stair treads (color light gray to blend with the concrete work). The front of each tread has a black 3" x 12" porcelain tile which was cut by Dal from 12 x 12s and then bullnosed along the leading edge the way one would fabricate a bullnose when using stone tiles. The use of the black strip was a safety requirement, to make the front of each step more visible. The tile surfaces are textured and unglazed for slip resistance.

"I'd like to acknowledge George Shadow, our helper on the job, for his finesse in dealing with the details."

St. Petersburg's YMCA: A Theater of Tiles



The original YMCA in St. Petersburg, Florida was designed by Clarence Brown and Archie Parish and opened in 1926. Located at the corner of 5th St. South and 2nd Ave. South, the 5-story Mediterranean Revival style building provides a 'theater' of tile installations, all either produced or provided by the Crescent Tile Company of St. Petersburg. Having been unoccupied for the past fifteen years, the building today is undergoing an inspired renovation.



Maya-inspired fireplace surround produced by the Crescent Clay Craft Tile Co.

Mayan Tiles at the Y

“E-News Summer 2014” featured cement tiles in Maya-inspired designs produced by the **Crescent Clay Craft Tile Company** in St. Petersburg. **E. L. Marshall** is named as the ceramic engineer in charge of this tile studio owned by the **Crescent Tile Company** at the same address.



While visiting the Y in St. Pete this spring, we discovered some extraordinary examples heretofore unknown, nine different representations of ceremonial figures in relief... all made of clay.



With Marshall having previously worked at both Batchelder and Claycraft Potteries in California, one would assume that his studio would have produced fired clay tiles as well as the cement ones.



Entering the building from 2nd Ave. South, one would find this magnificent tile fireplace to the right, accompanied on either side by a decorative cement tile wainscot, the focal point of the large room.

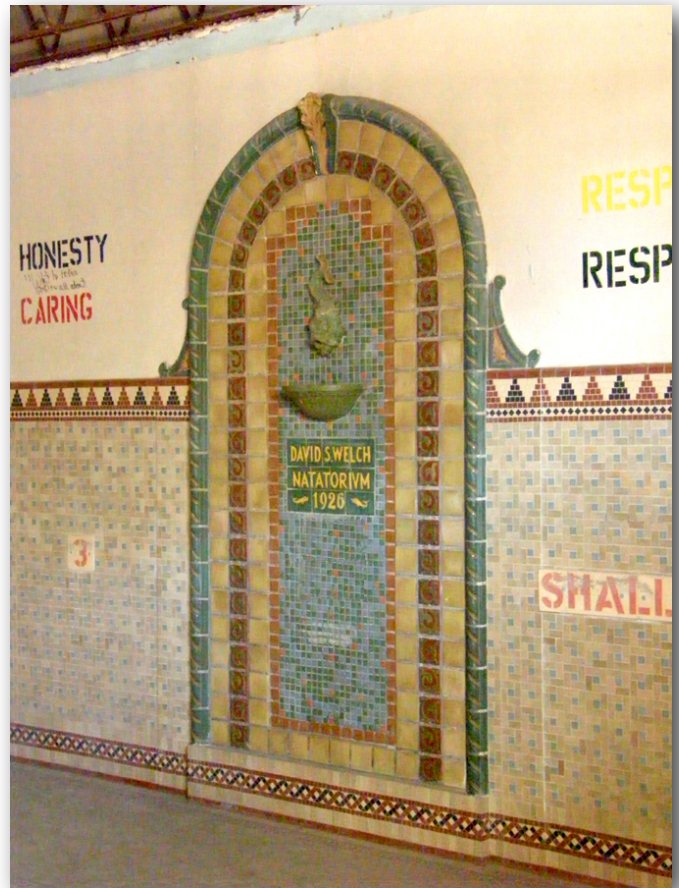


More 'Theatrics' at the Y

Based on the building's historical associations and architectural significance, the YMCA is eligible for listing on the National Register. [Details and complete floor plan](#) are available online.



Mueller Mosaic Company.

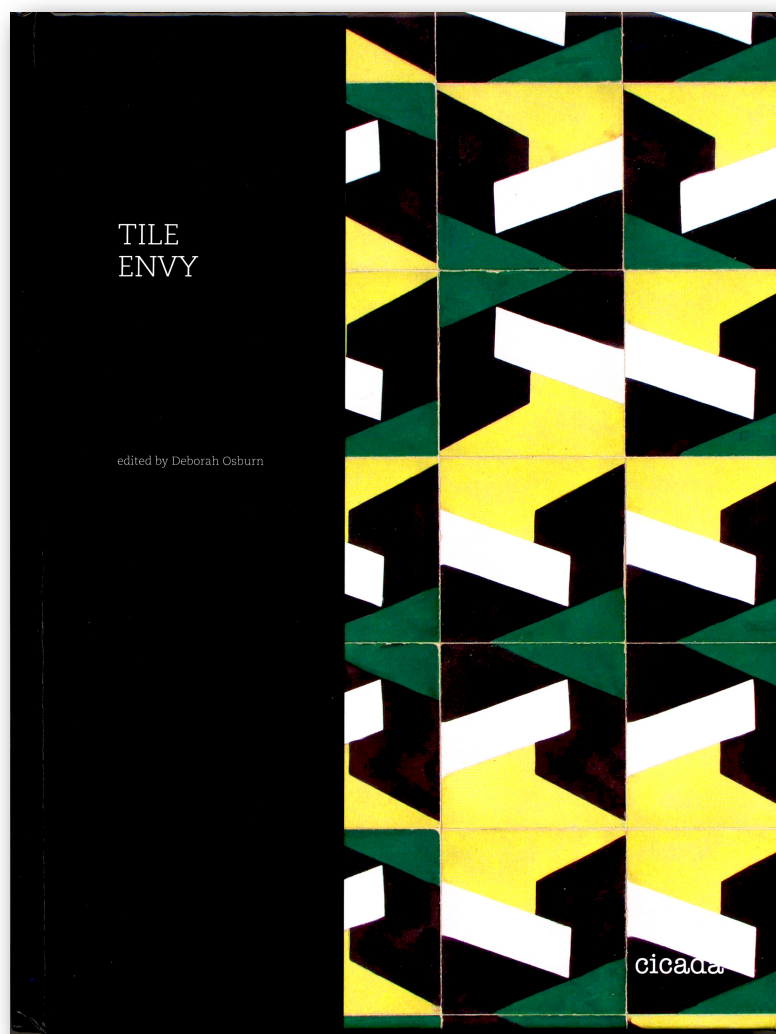


Wall fountain, wainscot and the entire swimming pool:
Mueller Mosaic Company, Trenton, New Jersey.



Several large decorative panels adorn the exterior walls and those of the inner courtyard at the Y.
Produced by Jose Laffitte in Triana-Sevilla and imported by the Crescent Tile Company.

All of the tiles at the YMCA
were supplied and installed
by the Crescent Tile Co. of
St. Petersburg, 1926.



Tile Envy edited by Deborah Osburn.

Tile Envy

Edited by Deborah Osburn

Cicada Books Limited
London, 2014

Like others I'm sure, I've waited for *Tile Envy*, having become addicted to Ms. Osburn's blog of the same name. And now that I have the book in hand, I'm wondering why I keep opening it!

I'm reminded of my reaction to Frank Giorgini's *Handmade Tiles* when it first appeared in 1994. Having lived through the '70s and '80s with only the Sunset tile books to stimulate the senses, it was the gallery of contemporary tile art accompanying Frank's encouraging 'how to' text that drew me into a trance-like state. Each tile was identified with the artist's name, most of whom were unfamiliar at the time, but there was no need to search through an appendix or index to find out who's work was on what page!

Tile Envy is fundamentally a celebration, a gorgeous tribute to 60 artistic artisans from around the world who have chosen to 'speak' their personal truth through the medium of tile. Sometimes in clay, in cement, in glass, among others, all represent the 'cutting edge' of design today. And the photography is clear, crisp and hugely colorful, often taking up full pages, leaving the text brief to augment each image with a splash of insight, a fitting footnote from the editor.

Interestingly unpaginated, the book's 130 pages are divided into four sections: Illustration, Texture, Pattern, Art and Architecture, each represented by a select group of named artists, most presented in 1 or 2 pages. There is a Web Directory and Photo Credits in the back as well as a revealing Introduction by Ms. Osburn up front. The bulk in between is dazzling color and sheer stimulation, which is exactly what keeps bringing me back. Find it for \$24.95 online.

Concluding the editor's Introduction, she writes "We hope that we have managed to translate some of our energy and enthusiasm for tiles into a collection worthy of baiting you, the reader, into joining our tribe of tile obsessives, igniting a similar passion for the beauty - and functionality - of the humble tile." Not quite so "humble" as you will see!

Joseph A. Taylor

TCNA Provides Advantages for Art Tile Makers!

The Tile Council of North America (TCNA) welcomes artisan tile companies to join with others at the upcoming Coverings exposition in Chicago, April 18-21, 2016. There are definitely major advantages to being a TCNA member at the show. See below...



Art tile folk kickin' back at Coverings, April 2015, in Orlando. From the left: Lee Gruber and David del Junco, Syzygy Tileworks; Lisa TevaClark, Bella Vista Tile; Karim Motawi, Wizard Enterprise; and Sarah and Richard Scott, Status Ceramics.

Premium booth location: As a TCNA member you would be able to exhibit in the North American Pavilion, which historically has the highest show traffic and which has a coordinated area designed specifically for North American art/studio tile manufacturers, the Art Tile Village/Courtyard area, where TCNA members may co-exhibit if prearranged.

Free drayage: TCNA members enjoy free drayage (freight handling at the show), which otherwise is up to \$9.75/sq. ft. depending on the venue.

- Discounted booth space (\$300 savings for every 100 sq. ft. of booth space)
- Free booth cleaning during the show (non-members pay approx. \$1.50/sq. ft.)
- Opportunity to tile a bench, which would be prominently displayed in a high-traffic area (TCNA booth or the Art Tile Courtyard) during the show
- Promotion of your new products at TCNA's press conference
- Numerous promotional events designed to drive traffic to the North American Pavilion
- Use of two conference rooms for exhibiting members interested in holding meetings

For annual dues of only \$250 (for annual sales up to \$1 million), membership is an especially great value for artisan tile companies. Contact Andrew Whitmire at AWhitmire@tileusa.com.