



Design and execution of a mosaic tile mural for the Student Union Theatre at Montana State College
by Duane Robert Hagen

A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
MASTER OF APPLIED ART

Montana State University

© Copyright by Duane Robert Hagen (1963)

Abstract:

The possibility of creating a mural that would be of lasting significance to the interior of the Student Union Theatre intrigued the author. The plain, unadorned wall of the ticket booth offered a location for a mural to provide texture, color, and depth in a cramped and uninteresting space.

The author spent considerable time working in theatre productions which inspired several ideas for the mural. One used a cut tile that fitted into a realistic cartoon. Another idea had large pieces of cut tile that had been painted with glaze. The final design was of an abstract nature with small rectangular tiles being glazed with a variety of colors developed from Hagen V glaze, The Hagen V glaze was tested with five or six different proportions of each of twelve different coloring oxides, to produce many interesting, colors. Many of these colors were used in the mural; others showed good possibilities for other ceramic use.

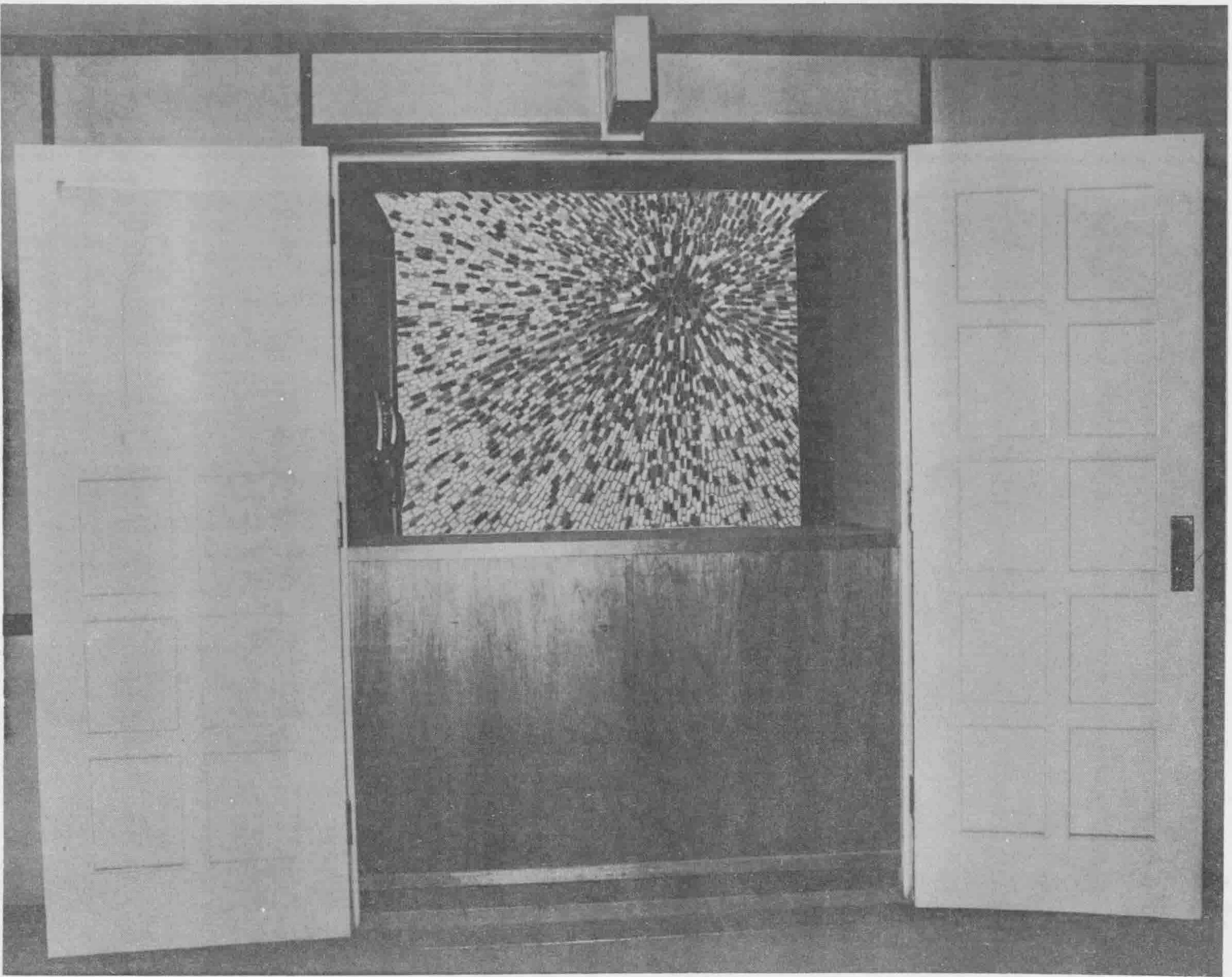


Figure 1. Completed mural

DESIGN AND EXECUTION OF A MOSAIC TILE MURAL FOR THE STUDENT UNION
THEATRE AT MONTANA STATE COLLEGE

by

DUANE ROBERT HAGEN

A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF APPLIED ART

Approved:

C. H. Conradts

Head, Major Department

Francesco Senzka

Chairman, Examining Committee

James R. Smith

Dean, Graduate Division

MONTANA STATE COLLEGE
Bozeman, Montana

August, 1963

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

In deep appreciation I acknowledge the assistance and encouragement through-out the many summers it has taken to complete this thesis, of the following people; Cyril H. Conrad, Jessie Wilber, Frances Senska, Robert DeWeese, George Conkey, and Joseph C. Fitch.

I also wish to express my gratitude to Michael Conkey and Veris Wessel whose help has been most valuable, and to Robert Dunbar, without whose council this thesis might not have been undertaken.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Title Page.	i
Vita.	ii
Acknowledgment.	iii
List of Tables.	v
List of Figures.	vi
Abstract.	vii
Introduction.	viii
Outline Of The Problem.	x
HISTORY OF MOSAIC	2
PRELIMINARY AND SUPPLEMENTARY STUDIES.	5
THE DESIGN.	7
INFLUENCES OF LITERATURE CONSULTED.	16
THE GLAZE	20
CONSTRUCTION OF THE MURAL AND TESSELLATING.	26
MAKING THE TESSERA.	27
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.	29
Literature Consulted.	31

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
I China Paint On Bathroom Tile	21
II High Fire Glaze On Bathroom Tile	21
III China Paint On Hagen V Glaze at 1950 ⁰ F.	23
IV China Paint On Hagen V Glaze at 2380 ⁰ F.	23
V Colors Obtained With Hagen V Glaze	25

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
1. Photograph of The Completed Mural.	Frontispiece
2. Photograph of The Student Union Theatre Ticket Booth	xi
3. Photograph of Initial Design	8
4. Photograph of "Tom Sawyer" Example	9
5. Photograph of Close Up of "Tom Sawyer" Example	9
6. Photograph of Early Designs.	11
7. Photograph of Early Designs.	12
8. Photograph of Early Designs.	14
9. Photograph of Early Designs.	15

ABSTRACT

The possibility of creating a mural that would be of lasting significance to the interior of the Student Union Theatre intrigued the author. The plain, unadorned wall of the ticket booth offered a location for a mural to provide texture, color, and depth in a cramped and uninteresting space.

The author spent considerable time working in theatre productions which inspired several ideas for the mural. One used a cut tile that fitted into a realistic cartoon. Another idea had large pieces of cut tile that had been painted with glaze. The final design was of an abstract nature with small rectangular tiles being glazed with a variety of colors developed from Hagen V glaze.

The Hagen V glaze was tested with five or six different proportions of each of twelve different coloring oxides to produce many interesting colors. Many of these colors were used in the mural; others showed good possibilities for other ceramic use.

INTRODUCTION

During the summer of nineteen fifty-six, Montana State College was in the midst of an expansion development. The Student Union was enlarged to provide better facilities to accommodate the students at the college. The ballroom was converted from a dance and banquet area into a student theatre and extensive work was done to provide a home for the offices of the college theatre department. During the redevelopment, the front hallway connecting the student lounge with the east entrance was not changed, and three sets of double doors that had served as entrances for the ballroom were now used for the theatre. The space behind the center set of double doors was converted into a ticket booth and storage area, thus utilizing space under a former balcony that was converted into offices and a projection room. When the center set of double doors was opened, a counter was revealed which covered half of the space within the door frame. Two side partitions enclosed the ticket booth area and there was blank wall in back.

At the time of the expansion, I was doing graduate work and my interest in the theatre had just been revived. I was offered the opportunity to create a mural for the ticket booth. The bleakness of the wall, the cramped space, and the limited visual quality of the booth were all stimulating challenges in meeting the problem.

At the time of formulation of the thesis, I was intrigued by the qualities of a glaze that I had developed in a Special Topics class in ceramics. It seemed logical to me to combine the two problems. My experience in

theatre and ceramics led me to feel that a mosaic mural would offer stimulating research in glaze color and texture and experience in mural execution, with the final result of enhancing the theatre.

OUTLINE OF THE PROBLEM

1. A mural for the ticket booth of the Student Union Theatre.
2. Solve the problem of a cramped, bleak, visually limited wall space with brightness, depth, and interesting textures.
3. Solve the problem of a ticket seller dominating the visual space within the booth.
4. Design a mural consistent with the artist's interpretation of theatre.
5. Develop a glaze and a variety of colors from it that would fit a high fire clay.

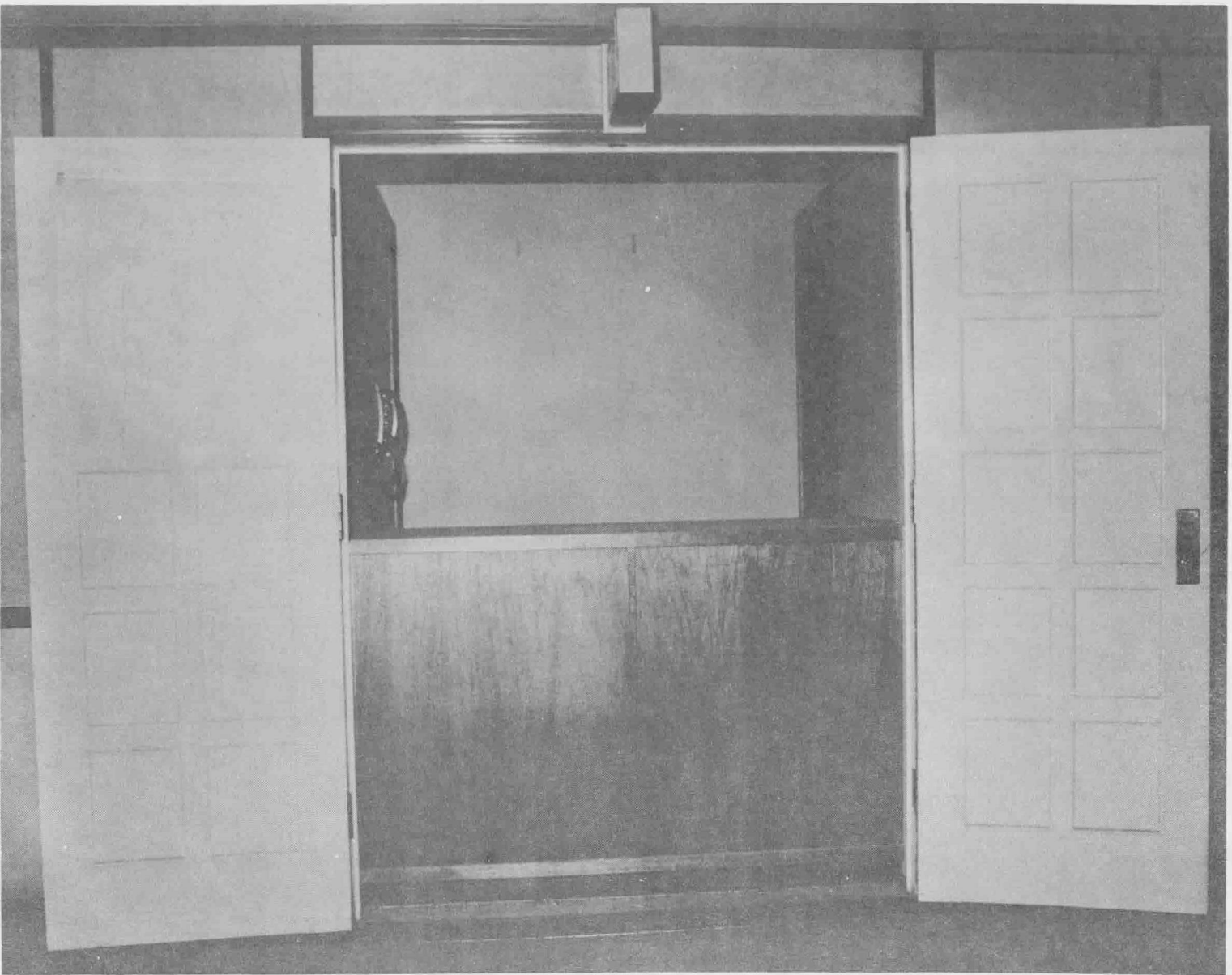


Figure 2. Photograph of the Student Union Theatre Ticket Booth

