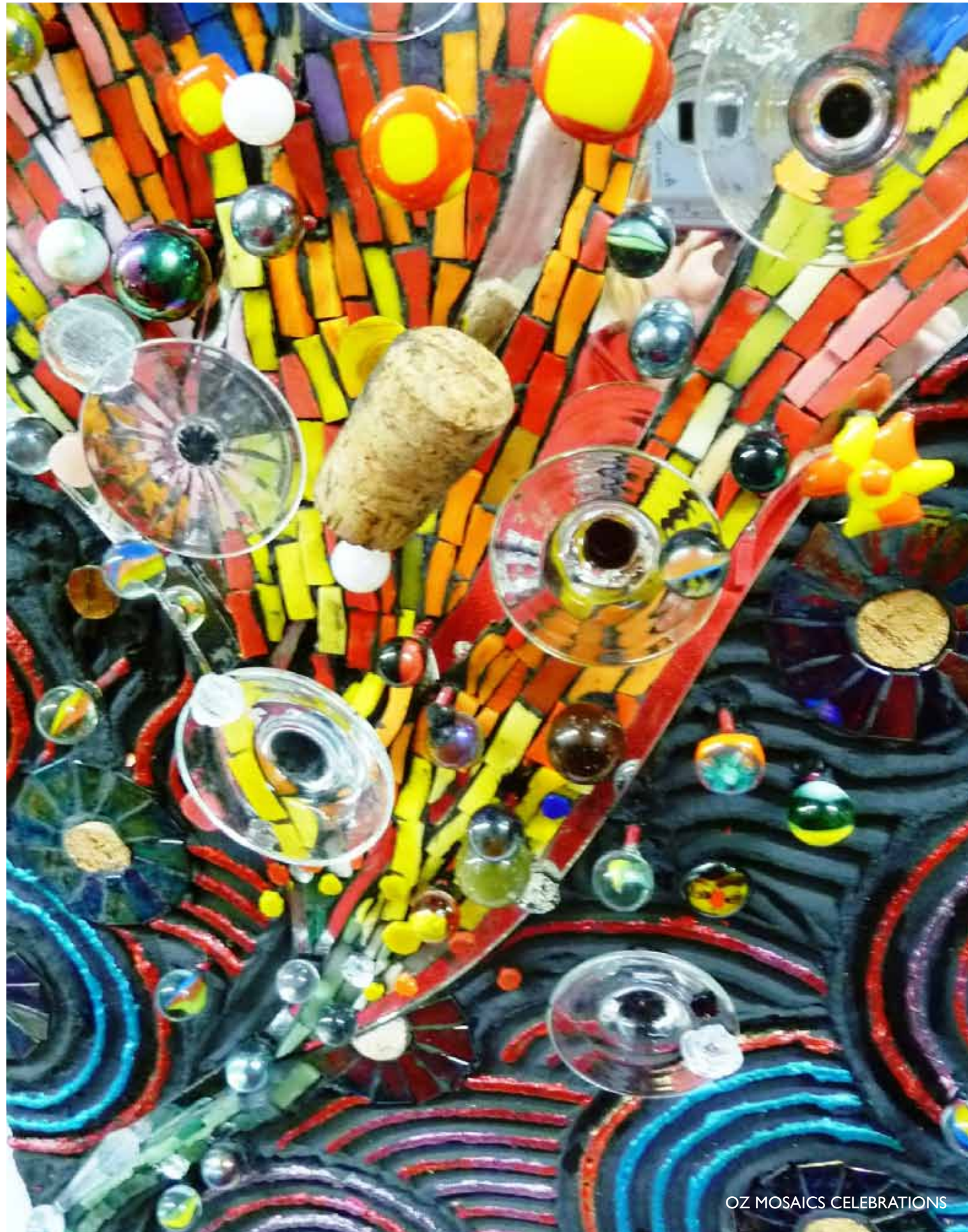


MOSAIC DIVA SANDY ROBERTSON



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I first discovered the technique of mosaic, after viewing a Sunday TV art segment featuring a mosaic artist decorating a lamp shade base with broken china. She was passionate about recycled materials and her words captivated me. After many years in the fashion industry and previously owning an art/crafts store, I already had a garage overflowing with textiles, laces and a diverse collection of odds and ends to fuel my mosaic fire. The following weekend, we returned home from a football game, to find a treasured, heirloom plate had smashed on the floor (others blamed the cat, but I feel destiny had a hand in it). Excitedly, I collected the china pieces and rummaged in our garage for an old pot of tile adhesive and a hammer. I ran to our garden where we had an old bathtub that was still waiting to be renovated. It had been raining, but I didn't care as I worked away, up to my ankles in mud. My fingers flew and the mosaic grew before my eyes. I added other items including mirror and only stopped when darkness fell. The mosaic bug had bitten badly! I knew then that mosaics would take over my life. The mosaic bathtub still sits in our garden, a special reminder of where it all started.

Apart from client commissions, workshops and several large community anniversary murals in 2013, my current focus is working on the release of MOSI (Mosaic Online School Int.). Students may enrol in MOSI, to keep updated with mosaic tips/tricks, online tutorials, exciting mosaic projects and more! I have introduced new smalti workshops this year and students will select from over 264 colours of Dynasty smalti!



INTERVIEW CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

We will return to Christmas Island (which is off the coast of Australia) working with members of CIAA for Stage 2 of the massive seat project and I am excited to start work on the Great Wall of mOZ – a huge mosaics wall surrounding OzMosaics.

Where are you living in Australia?

OzMosaics Studio is located at Coorparoo, Brisbane, Queensland, close to the city.

How did you become interested in mosaics?

After gluing down the first tile, I could see the endless mosaic possibilities - I want to cover the world in mosaics from garden pots to skyscrapers!

Did you study the art of mosaic or are you self taught?

I am self-taught. I knew what I wanted, I didn't want to get side-tracked, so I set out experimenting with tools, materials and cements, pushing the limits, always learning, discovering much along the way, finding solutions and sharing mosaic tips and tricks.

What makes your work so unique?

I am passionate about 3-D mosaics with many layers. When china, mirror, glass bottles and found objects combine with traditional materials such as smalti, gold, marble, glass and ceramic my mosaic palette overflows. Concrete fascinates me - it is more art than adhesive.

Do you hand cut all your mosaic tiles and what other items do you use to create your art work?

I hand cut my mosaic tesserae (mosaic materials). I could not live without my Leponitt mosaic cutter tool. I invented the "Handy Sandy" which allows one to cut in bed, the bath, the car with no mess! Other favourite tools are a glass/metal tile file, a mosaic scorer/breaker tool, safety glasses, a hammer and a standard tile nipper.

What led you to decide to set up a professional business?

Demand for my workshops, mosaic commissions and our mosaic supplies soon had me out of the garage. We added a purpose built studio/shop/teaching space. Working from a home base studio is perfect as I can work and enjoy my family simultaneously.

What has been the most exciting commission that you have worked on to date?

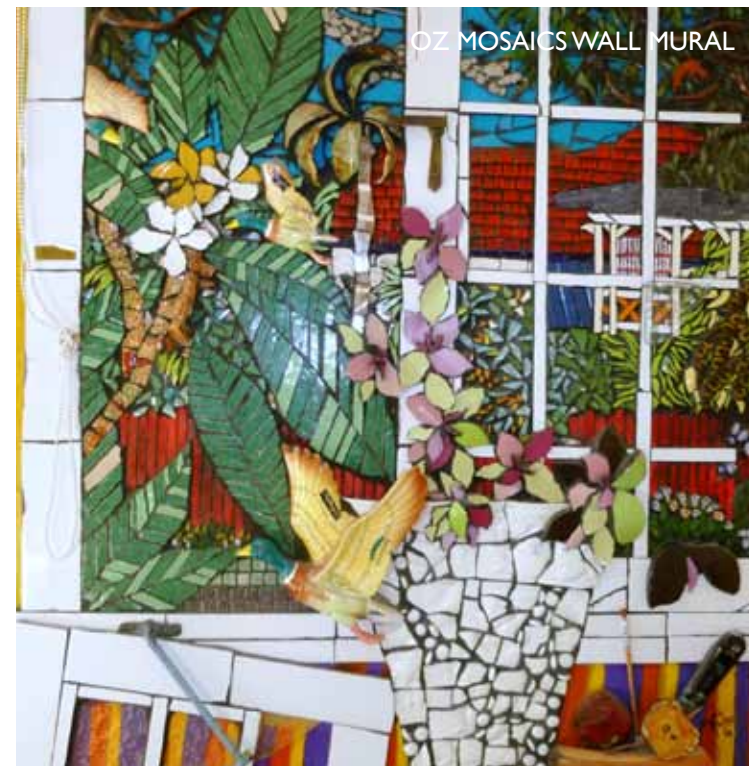
The Steve Irwin International Mosaic Tribute - truly art from the heart! An emotional time working with my mosaic addicts group for many months at OzMosaics studio to piece together hundreds of mosaics, contributions from around the world! Laticrete Australia generously donated adhesives and grout. The mural panels were installed at Australia Zoo in 2008.

When planning your workshop schedule, what is the most crucial factor that you have to consider?

My workshops start with a warning "making mosaics is addictive". I have to check that students are not hiding under the workbench - a common comment is "we want to move in forever". It is also very important that students understand the basics of mosaics – how to prepare the substrates, select appropriate adhesives and materials for outdoor installations – it's no good making beautiful art if it falls apart in the weather.

When you need some time out, how do you wind down?

I flop on my diva couch, grab some chocolate and watch movies for a day! Sometimes we zoom out in our boat on Moreton Bay and walk the sandy shores, collecting shells for my mosaics. A trip to the markets and op shops is always fabulous; stopping for a bunch of huge sunflowers. A glass of bubbles doesn't go astray either...



OZ MOSAICS WALL MURAL



OZ MOSAICS NORFOLK ISLAND MURAL



OZ MOSAICS HONG KONG



OZ MOSAICS POOL FEATURE



OZ MOSAICS POOL WALL

If you would like to attend a workshop with Sandy, purchase materials, commission a piece or view more of her work, you will find her details below.

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PHOTO CREDIT SANDY ROBERTSON