

MOSAIC

MOSAIC: The Clarifier Project has come to fruition and now it's time to celebrate with the Sounds of Lyons



Cohan



Wu



Rivers

By Priscilla Cohan,
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Redstone Review

LYONS – On September 12 from 1:30 until 6 p.m., MOSAIC will present the dedication of the Clarifier, a procession along the river with music and songs, and Sounds of Lyons at Sandstone Park.

Two years after the flood that reshaped the landscape, the politics, and the lives of our town and people, we will celebrate a return to the things that bring us together: arts, music, and community. MOSAIC: Celebrating Lyons III, which will combine two artistic forces both compelled by the

love of the community, the Clarifier Project and Sounds of Lyons, invites everyone to participate. Join us in celebrating the beauty, the resilience, the legacy, and the spirit of Lyons. Come witness how visions became stunning reality. Come be part of the Clarifier and Sounds of Lyons, led by artists and powered by community.



It all began with an ugly concrete tank and a vision.

The event will commence with an Open House, a guided tour around the Clarifier, at 1:30 p.m. From 2 to 3 p.m. the dedication ceremony will see a performance by Mayama dancers, musical offerings, and ribbon cutting by LaVern Johnson. From 3 to 3:30 p.m. join the procession to Sandstone with songs and music, and the blessing of Clarifier. Arriving at Sandstone Park, Sounds of Lyons will present the sensational SOL Trio with guitar virtuoso Alfredo Muro, flutist Emma Shubin, and vocalist Shannon Johnson; and with members of Taarka, David Tiller and Enion Pelta-Tiller; and the formidable Celtic band Take Down the Door.

The Clarifier Project originated at the successful completion of The Lyons Mural Project – Lyons, Past, Present and Future in 2004, with which Confluence Community Arts, CoCoA was formed. This group, Kristine Smock, Cathy Rivers, Candace Shepard, Shelly

Gottshamer and Priscilla Cohan, initiated the Clarifier, and together with GAP Group, an intergenerational group of citizens building community through making art, and the Lyons Golden Gang, a vision was created to design and build something spectacular with the community: the cycle of nature, the turning of the seasons, the movement through time, the trees located at the four cardinal points, and a simple outline reflecting the surrounding mountains, valleys and sky.

“We wanted a design that was clear and easy to read from a distance,” said Priscilla Cohan. Each of the elements had to possess strong contrast to stand out. In order



Lyons Golden Gang and the intergenerational GAP Group designed and made the fiery sun.

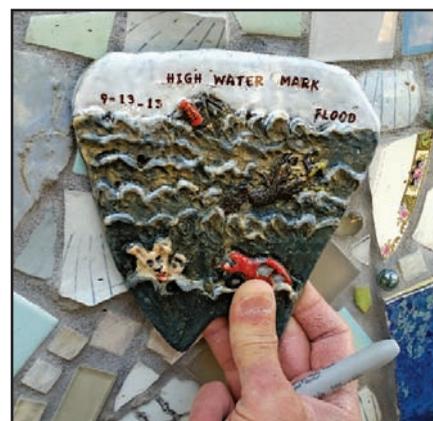
to make the trees be distinct from the sky they have black outline around each branch. The earth landscape section is darker and also outlined. These decisions were inspired by the work of Friedrich Hundertwasser, an Austrian artist and archi-

tect who also incorporated tile mosaic into many of his fantastic environments.

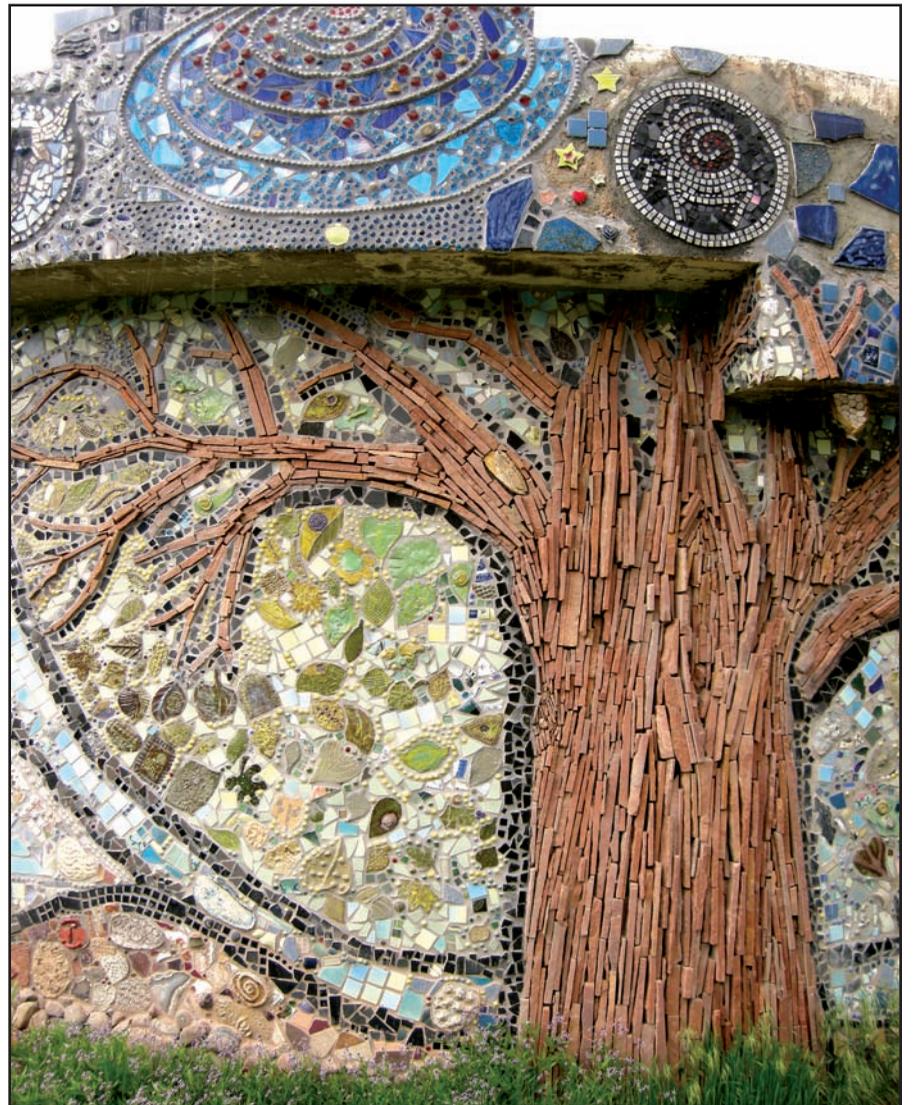
Preparatory work took about five years. The structure’s inner machinery was removed and the interior filled with dirt and debris. A generous donation from Loukounen Brothers Stone Company provided the project with the stone to create the trees. After trees came the earth, made from the hundreds of hand-made tiles that represent stones, and actual stones from the river. Volunteers of all ages come to break up tiles, apply mosaic pieces, and organize colors and grout, activities that continue through the writing of this article.

The theme is the cycle of nature and the turning of the planets through time. A tour around the Clarifier takes you through the four seasons, represented by the sandstone trees, with the planets and constellations of the night sky and Zodiac signs above your head. Tree leaves were created by Lyons Elementary, Middle and High School students; community members made the textural earth tiles; Lyons Golden Gang and the intergenerational GAP Group designed and made the fiery sun.

Thirteen local birds fly, float and perch around the periphery. Joel and Marcel Such began working with the Clarifier in



A tile commemorates the high water mark of the 2013 flood.



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PHOTOS FOR THIS STORY BY CATHY RIVERS

2005. Now young men, they have been contributing to the Clarifier since the beginning. They have researched and created these birds. Each one is exquisite in detail, color and form. They appear in the sky during the season you might normally see them in our local skies and each is headed in the direction of the seasons, leading a visitor in a counter-clockwise direction around the Clarifier.



The American Robin, one of thirteen local birds created by Joel and Marcel Such.

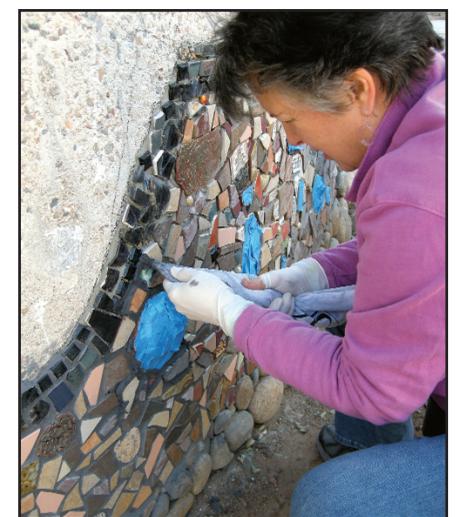
“We wanted to make a place that had a transformative quality – a place where family, neighbors, friends, strangers and everyone could come and witness the power of a community working together to make something beautiful,” said Priscilla Cohan. “It is a monument to peace and the qualities that bring us together rather than separate us.”

“It was a long road to get the project to a place where we could actually begin creating the artwork. We wanted to integrate our vision and the vision of the citizens, with a large immovable object and make the artwork last forever. The idea for the artwork was simple, but the logistics of building the artwork and maintaining interest that enthusiasm for over 10 years was difficult and at many times daunting. We persevered. Many mistakes were made, but finally we were able to get organized and begin work. And for several years we made significant progress.”

On September 12, 2013, the Clarifier somehow survived Lyons’ devastating

flood, adding a new dimension: the resilience of Lyons and its residents. A tile on the north side indicates the high water mark. Many displaced families were unable to return to Lyons because their homes were destroyed. In the eastern Clarifier sky a cosmic ripple with eight concentric rings honors Lyons’ collective flood experience and that of our community still displaced; red hearts and homes moving outward from the center, blue hearts represent the sadness and loss created by the flood. Notable is the participation of Ed Bruder, who has worked steadily to give the project extra gleam and wonder with thousands of yellow marbles around the sun. Bruder and the invaluable Kirk Vincent visualized the rings honoring those individuals and families displaced by the 2013 flood.

A driving force behind this project has been community support. Hundreds of people and organizations volunteered time, materials, help and support. Words cannot express our gratitude. Thank you to all.



Built with love and imagination by an entire community.