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LATICRETE Donates for Mosaic Art Masterpiece



June 22, 2010: LATICRETE, a global leader in the manufacturing of innovative systems for the installation of tile and stone, has continued its support of the fine arts community by donating two of its premium installation products for award-winning, London-based mosaic artist Gary Drostle's latest masterpiece commissioned by the University of Iowa. Drostle's "River of Life" mosaic art mural was one of the key architectural elements of its new \$59 million Campus Recreation and Wellness Center for its flagship location in Iowa City.

LATICRETE co-owner Henry Rothberg spearheaded the donation, and Drostle worked closely with LATICRETE Technical Services and locally-based Iowa reps in preparing the specification of LATICRETE® 254 Platinum thin-set and LATICRETE PermaColor™ Grout for Drostle's spectacular, 12' x 47' intricate porcelain and glass mosaic art mural. Inspired by the connection Iowa City and the state university both share with the Iowa River as it knifes directly through the center of each on its way to joining the Mississippi, Drostle's concept for this mosaic mural centered on the river as the vision of well-being or a path through life, rather than just a state of being at a single moment in time. Installed over masonry in the traditional two-step process, the River of Life is manifested with ½" and ¼" unglazed Winkelman French porcelain mosaics interspersed with Bisazza mosaic glass highlights.



The paper-faced mosaics were set reverse over the course of several days by Drostle and his team of four in LATICRETE 254 Platinum thin-set for its unmatched performance as well as the industry's top grout for the cement-based assembly of tile, stone or glass surfaces. LATICRETE PermaColor Grout offers the maximum **Innovative Tile and Stone Installation Systems**

performance available in cement-based grout, providing unmatched color consistency, enhanced with Microban® to resist stain-causing mold and mildew. Reinforced with Kevlar®, LATICRETE® PermaColor Grout is ideal for both floors and walls - inside or outside - in joint widths ranging all the way from 1/16" to 1/2". The LATICRETE® products for Drostle's River of Life exceed the most stringent requirements for GREENGUARD® Indoor Air Quality and offer peace of mind as components of the LATICRETE 25 Year System Warranty.

The architectural commission of the River of the Life was a key feature of the new three-level, 20,000 square-foot wellness and fitness center for the University of Iowa. With two pools, a diving well and a 25-person spa, Drostle's River of Life also addresses the aquatic nature of the center.



"The river symbolizing life is an ancient image connecting our most ancient cultures," said Drostle (pictured left). "Beginning at the top of the mural, the mouth of the river represents a gateway and the journey to its source, the path to enlightenment. The river as the bringer of life and purification. The meandering pattern of the river is much like the one the Iowa River takes. I

imagined the ground the river flows over as the rich pattern of human existence, culture and knowledge. The lighter colored areas in the background symbolize the ideal path of well-being, a life in balance with itself, the community and environment. On either side, the darker patterns are a life out of balance. In some parts the blue river lines break out completely, this portrays the extremes of life, illness, poverty, social, emotional and environmental deprivation. As the lines representing the river twist and turn, some break away completely just as some lives end before their time."

The delicate nature of installing a mosaic art mural required the help of four other experts in the field for the June installation. The symbolic River of Life mosaic mural was installed with help from Italy's Giulia Vogrig from Spilimbergo Mosaic School, Notre Dame atomic physics PhD candidate Levente Borvak, Julie Richey and Sarah Zirkel, Texas-based members of Mosaic Arts Now (MAN). Richey has been writing a detailed blog throughout the entire project, visit www.mosaicartnow.blogspot.com or give her a call for more details at 214.543.1558.

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