

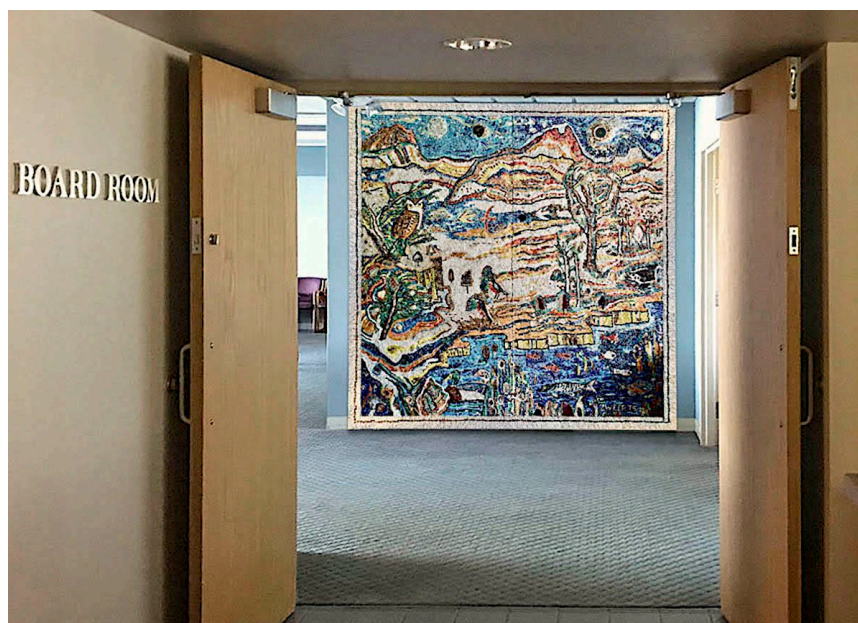
The Wisconsin Mosaic by Arnold Zweerts

Overview

In 2022, mosaic historian Lillian Sizemore brought this opportunity to the City of Madison. At the time around staff, we were developing a public art plan for the new Parks building. The original donors (The McCrimmons) were getting ready to move and they wanted their beloved mosaic to be displayed in a public space.

As the new Madison Parks Building Project had not generated an arts budget through our Percent for Art Program, arts staff had to get creative with our art plan. We were able to include several pieces from our permanent collection and purchase a few pieces. For example, a bench that was produced through Phoenix from the Ashes (funded in part by the Madison Community Foundation), a Christopher Sweet painting through a Mayor's Purchase award, some art loans etc. Ultimately everything we included seemed site specific to the building and we were very proud of how the public art enhanced their new space on opening day.

The offer of the Arnold Zweerts mosaic seemed to come at the right time and be a perfect fit for the building.



Mockup in board room entrance

The Kohler Foundation generously agreed to pay to move, conserve, and install the mosaic. However, when we had a structural engineer inspect the wall where the mosaic will go, they suggested that we reinforce the wall to support the weight. The estimate for that work is \$6,500. We did not have this work budgeted and we already had to seek budget authority to pay \$3,500 for the structural engineer. We already spoke with Kohler to see if they had any additional funding. They responded that they are not able to give more than they are already and expressed concern that they would have to pull the project.

Three years into this effort, City arts staff is committed to seeing this project through and are determined to fundraise for the \$6,500 gap.

Location

Madison Parks Division's Lakeside Offices' boardroom, 330 E. Lakeside Street, Madison, WI 53715.

Budget

Item	Cost	Funding Source
Mosaic Appraisal Value	\$38,000	Kohler Foundation Inc.
Conservation, Shipment, Framing & Installation	\$14,000	Kohler Foundation Inc.
Structural Engineer	\$3,500	Municipal Arts Fund
Wall Construction	\$6,500	TBD
Dedication Event	\$300	Friends of MAC*
Total:	\$62,300	

Funding Secured: \$55,500 (89.6% secured)

Kohler Foundation Inc.: \$52,000

Municipal Arts Fund: \$3,500

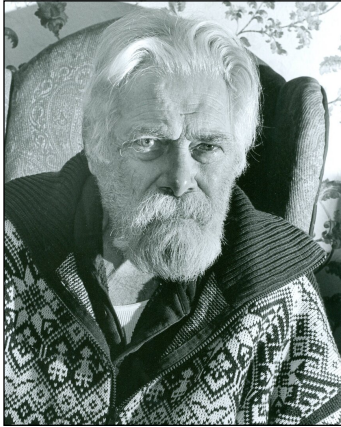
Funding Anticipated: \$300

Friends of MAC: \$300

Funding Needed: \$6,500

(Wall construction)

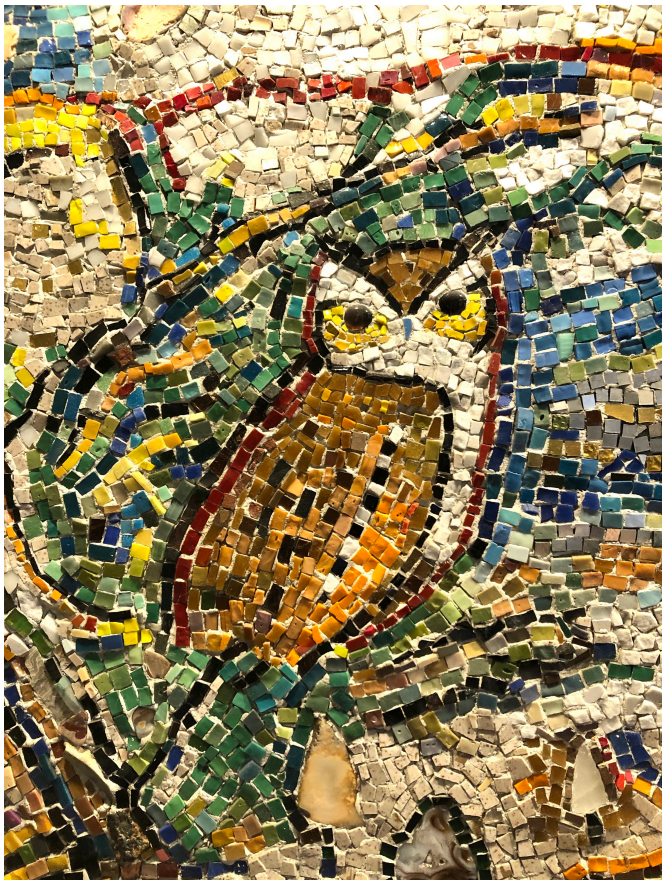
ARNOLD ZWEERTS (1918- 2009) Powerhouse Practitioner of Modern Mosaic



The Wisconsin Mosaic depicts a wild landscape that captivates our imagination. A glittering body of water is teeming with lively, colorful fish and ducks. We find a badger, an homage to the State of Wisconsin mascot animal. A distinctive treatment of the trees are made with an astonishing array of semi-precious stones and fossils. Mr. Zweerts was an Italian-trained mosaicist, educator and painter. Zweerts created dozens of mosaic panels, tables, and several other commissioned murals, leaving a legacy of mosaics, oil paintings, wood cuts, charcoal, pastels, pen and inks and pencil drawings.







More and more mosaic is being seen as a true art medium in its own right. This has brought with it an appreciation and emphasis on the qualities that set mosaic apart. Modern mosaic uses optical color mixing; that is the use of different hues in a field to heighten the mosaic surface qualities. Mosaic must be experienced in person to be fully appreciated. They are notoriously difficult to photograph to do justice to their lively surface quality.

With good reason, there is a growing interest in midcentury mosaic with increased scholarship and knowledge, brings more care and attention to preserve these historically significant works.

TITLE: UNTITLED

SUBJECT: Wisconsin Landscape

ARTIST-DESIGNER: ARNOLD ZWEERTS

Born November 29 1918, Bussum, Netherlands
Deceased November 6 2009, Hood River, Oregon
(91 years old)

DATE OF FABRICATION: 1977 (dated on the artwork itself) Arnold Zweerts created the piece himself while living in Wisconsin.

DIMENSIONS: 96 in x 96 in x 5 in. (8 ft x 8 ft x 5 in. depth) Surface Area 64 sq. ft.

MATERIALS:

Mixed-media on wood base, in two sections
For Interior positioning only

Identified in the work: Italian glass smalti, 24K gold smalti (flat and ondulato), flat glass vitreous tiles, marble, pebbles and stones, ceramic porcelain tile, ceramic pottery shards, glass beads, tumbled moonstone, mica, varied fossils, agates, geodes, ironstone, abalone (mother of pearl), shells.



THE ZWEERTS MOSAIC within the MODERN MOSAIC CANON:

The use of mosaic both in architectural settings and as an expressive decorative device, reached a high point in the United States at the mid-twentieth century. Artists and architects were working in collaboration to elevate the aesthetics of buildings with mosaic to tell important cultural stories. As an extension of the Designer-Craftsman movement, many painters of the period tried their hand at mosaic as a medium of expression. For architectural settings, they often used professional mosaic fabricators to achieve the technical skill and quality for larger works and wall panels. Prominent modern painters creating mosaic during this period include Lee Krasner, Marc Chagall, Sonia Delaunay, Jeanne Reynal, Pablo Picasso, Fernand Léger, Joan Miró, Niki de Saint Phalle, among others.

A number of Wisconsin artists were actively making architectural mosaic between the 1950s to 1970s. In Madison, significantly, there was Jame Watrous and Marjorie Kreilick who were both teaching at UW-Madison while taking sabbaticals to Italy and producing large scale mosaics around the state and country. Other strong architectural works by Edmund Lewandowski, a precisionist painter, and Merritt Yearsley, a sculptor, can be found in Milwaukee.

Zweerts, too, was making mosaic throughout this critical period, and while he is little known, his work is worthy of study and collection. With his direct connections to traditional Italian training, his vast network of artistic connections through the Chicago Contemporary Art Workshop, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Allende Institute in Mexico, and extensive world travels, the Wisconsin Landscape mural and other works, mark a valuable and welcome addition to the larger canon of midcentury mosaic.



More information is available and we'd be happy to discuss the possibilities. Viewing the artwork can be arranged and is recommended.

Please contact
Lillian Sizemore, mosaic specialist and consultant
Madison, WI
415-793-0079
Lillian@LillianSizemore.com
LillianSizemore.com