

Mosaic Art in Ancient Greece

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Mosaic is one of the oldest and most beautiful art forms known to human civilization.

Historians have a hard time pin pointing the exact origins of this ancient art. They know that mosaics go back more than 4,000 years.

Examples



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Mosaic is basically the art of creating beautiful motifs and patterns, with the help of colorful stones, glass pieces, clay and other such items.

These motifs are also used as floor patterns and other forms of interior decorative art.

Though the exact origin place of this art is untraceable, this pattern is often associated with Roman and Greece dwellings and cathedrals, because of its prominent visibility in the Roman and Greek culture.



When mosaic art first began in ancient Greece it was typically only available for royalty and to the higher and wealthier classes. Eventually In some cases, even those of modest means had their hand in mosaic artwork. Greek mosaics were crafted out of worn down ciottoli (or pebbles). With time, they learned how to arrange the pebbles in a picture so that shading and designs were created to make the pictures more realistic. They also used strips of lead to define lines in the pictures. During the 4th century BCE, Greeks made new strides in mosaic tile art by using pieces of stones and colored glass. As a result, mosaics became brighter and more realistic.



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Among the most famous mosaic tile locations was Pergamo, the capital of Misia, where the first school of mosaic tile was born under the master artist Sosos.



This mosaic fragment— found in 1833 is a reproduction of a popular design by Sosos. The mosaic depicts an androῦν floor (dining room floor) littered with food after a dinner party. In the traditional Greek feast, guests reclined on couches placed atop a raised dais; they would toss chicken and fish bones, lobster and urchin shells, and unconsumed vegetables onto the floor.

The image is believed to be a copy of a lost ancient Greek mosaic at Pergamon created by Sosos.



Greek mosaics were made for beauty, but function also played an important role. Mosaics were used as flooring, to decorate fountains and garden paths, and to decorate and reinforce columns, stairs and walls. Mosaics were also used in ceilings of churches and other important buildings.



Mythology has always played a large role in inspiring Greek mosaics. The buildings of Greece are dotted with mosaics of Zeus, Poseidon, Triton, Aphrodite, Paris, Daphne and the whole family of gods, telling of the myths of the ancient Greeks. These mosaics are beautifully detailed, with the gods riding exotic animals, flying across the skies and into oceans, fighting courageous battles and telling beautiful and tragic love stories.

