



For media and press inquiries, please contact:

Megan Smith  
Brownstone PR  
p: 215-410-9879  
e: [megan@brownstonepr.com](mailto:megan@brownstonepr.com)

Ellen M. Owens  
Philadelphia's Magic Gardens  
p: 215.733.0390  
e: [eowens@phillymagicgardens.org](mailto:eowens@phillymagicgardens.org)  
Fax: 267.519.3019

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Nationally-acclaimed mosaic artists showcased at Philly Magic Gardens**

### ***Shattering Expectations: MOSAIC 2014***

#### **Exhibition at Philadelphia's Magic Gardens**

**SOUTH STREET, PHILADELPHIA:** Join Philadelphia's Magic Gardens and the Mosaic Society of Philadelphia for an eye-opening exhibition that celebrates the vibrancy of the American mosaic community. *Shattering Expectations: MOSAIC 2014* presents numerous works from eight selected artists – including international award-winners – that illustrate the innovation American artists bring to medium previously dominated by Europeans. The exhibition runs Friday, March 7 – Sunday, April 20, 2014, with a free public reception for the grand unveiling on Friday, March 7, from 6:00 – 9:00 PM.

Mosaics are present throughout Philadelphia—in our train stations, our city hall, and even on our streets, thanks to the Mural Arts Program and mural master Isaiah Zagar. Carol Shelkin, President of the Mosaic Society of Philadelphia, says of contemporary mosaic: "I believe [this] is the next step in this city's grand history of artistic and cultural expression." Philly's own Carol Stirton-Broad, a featured artist in *Shattering Expectations* and an instructor at Samuel S. Fleisher Art Memorial explains, "It is my great pleasure to be a part of a new resurgence of this ancient art... I love to explore the traditional techniques of mosaics while seeking to create work that expands this discipline."

This exhibition was curated and juried by Nancie Mills Pipgras, editor of [mosaicartnow.com](http://mosaicartnow.com), former president of the [Society of American Mosaic Artists](http://Society of American Mosaic Artists) and an international author and speaker on the topic of modern mosaic. "I believe that visitors to the exhibit will be surprised by how these makers are using a medium normally relegated decorative embellishment to make extraordinarily powerful, richly relevant, highly personal works of art. I expect that a lot of expectations will be shattered – and it's about time."

Highlights of *Shattering Expectations* include a site-specific work by [Samantha Holmes](#), a father and daughter artist pair with their own unique approaches ([Yakov](#) and [Yulia Hanansen](#)), and interviews with the artists via QR code. These transformative experiences all occur within the environment of Isaiah Zagar's iconic masterwork, Philadelphia's Magic Gardens. The exhibition is a co-presentation of the Mosaic Society of Philadelphia. The grand unveiling falls on a Philadelphia "First Friday."

## EXHIBITED ARTISTS:

[Karen Kettering Dimit](#) co-founded the LIC Arts Open in Queens and resides in Manhattan. Dimit has shown throughout the U.S., most recently at the Museum of Glass in Tacoma, InScape in Seattle, The Gallery at Penn College of Technology, the LIC Art Center Gallery, the Museum of Man in San Diego, and in the *Idle Hands* exhibition in New York City. She won the Best in Show in the High Risk Gallery juried international mosaic show in Chicago; she also won First Place in the Pen and Brush 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual Sculpture Exhibition in New York City. She studied at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, The Compleat Sculptor in New York, and Orsoni Mosaics in Venice, Italy.

[Yakov Hanansen](#), an award-winning artist has been working on a broad range of commissions for both public and private spaces for more than thirty years. His career as a mosaic artist started in the former Soviet Union with his first mosaic mural commissioned in 1975. He has completed dozens of large-scale commissions for museums and other public spaces, including projects for New York City buildings, Penn Station in New York, New Jersey Transit's train stations, and projects in Boston, California, Pennsylvania, and other cities in the U.S. and abroad. In addition to creating public artworks, Hanansen enjoys personal time at his Unicorn Art Studio. His works have been exhibited in galleries and museums nationwide and internationally.

[Yulia Hanansen](#) is an internationally known award-winning artist and educator. Her work has been exhibited in galleries and museums nationwide including Tacoma Museum of Glass, Chicago Museum of Glass, Chicago Mosaic School, and The Gallery at Penn College of Technology. Hanansen is a recipient of numerous awards for her mosaic and printmaking artwork, including the Best in Show prize at Mosaic Arts International. Hanansen holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, a Master of Arts from University of Michigan, and Master of Fine Arts from Columbia University. She has lived in Russia, Uzbek Republic, Lithuania, New York City, and Michigan. She currently resides in Baltimore and teaches printmaking and foundations at Towson University.

[Samantha Holmes](#) is an artist based in New York and Ravenna, Italy, who focuses on conceptual and material experimentation in the medium of mosaic. Her work has been exhibited internationally, including at the ARTPLAY Design Center (Moscow), the Moti Hasson Gallery (New York), and the International Festival of Contemporary Mosaic (Ravenna). In 2011, Holmes represented Italy at the European commission Les Langages du Bleu in Paris and was the recipient of the International Art Prize from the Museum of the City of Ravenna. She has a Bachelor of Arts from Harvard University and is finishing a Master of Fine Arts in Experimental Mosaic from the Accademia di Belle Arti in Ravenna. She is editor of the international arts journal SoloMosaico and a fellow in the Bronx Art Museum's Artists.

[Rachel Sager](#), a Southwestern Pennsylvania native, works on the cutting edge of the contemporary mosaic fine art movement. Her work has been represented in cities throughout the U.S. and internationally and has been awarded multiple Bests of Show in juried exhibitions. Her Marcellus Shale series stands as a true Pittsburgh success story and her work is collected with passion by private clients and corporations all over the world. Sager's studies with Italian master mosaicists have shaped her mosaic philosophy, and she brings these classical techniques home to Pittsburgh, with its sandstone, limestone, slate, and coal seams.

**Carol Stirton-Broad** has always been an artist it took her a long time to become a full-time practicing professional. She has worked in photography labs, at a pottery supply, in a book store, and as a New York City police officer. She studied at the School of Visual Arts in New York City and graduated from Tyler School of Art with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in ceramics—pursuing both at the same time. Later Stirton-Broad attended mosaic workshops and classes including several in Ravenna and at Orsoni in Venice, Italy. She has shown at the Snyderman-Works, the Art Alliance, and The Clay Studio in Philadelphia, at Arianna Gallery in Royal Oak, Michigan, and at the Bath House Cultural Center in Dallas, Texas. Her work has appeared in several publications and she has created large-scale tile and mosaic murals in public

and institutional settings. Most importantly, she maintains a full schedule as a teaching artist.

[Carol Talkov](#) works primarily in stone, smalti glass, minerals, and gems. Her inspiration is typically drawn from nature or place. Talkov grew up in Newton, Massachusetts, and studied theatrical design at Boston's Emerson College and Brandeis University. She relocated to New York City to work as a design professional, creating costumes for theater, dance, opera, and films. A successful business owner and custom interior fabricator, Talkov operated the well-regarded Carol Studios for twenty-seven years in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area. Her nuanced fabric and drapery sensibilities made her a sought-after design partner and consultant. Her work has been shown in *House Beautiful*, *Southern Accents*, and *Architectural Digest*, among others.

[Brooks Tower](#) is an Oklahoma fine art mosaicist, well-known for his distinctive style, as well as his innovative techniques. His work in the field of opus sectile – the cutting of stone, glass, and porcelain first developed by the Romans – is considered by many to be groundbreaking. In 2007, his piece, *Market Day II*, was awarded Best of Show at the Society of American Mosaic Artists annual juried exhibition. His work *Via* was awarded a juror's prize by Matteo Randi in the 2013 Mosaic Arts International. Other works have won Best 2-D and Equal Merit awards, and his work has been featured in both print and on-line publications. His work hangs in private collections throughout the U.S. and in Great Britain, Canada, and Australia. He began his first mosaic at the age of 45 and is completely self-taught.

---

#### **MOSAIC SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA**

The Mosaic Society of Philadelphia (MSoP) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the promotion of and appreciation for the practice of mosaic art in the Philadelphia area. Through community outreach, education, and a strong membership base, MSoP is committed to helping artists in the region explore the growing art of mosaics. MSoP's endeavors and accomplishments include exhibitions, demonstrations, workshops, and community education in the arts. For more information, visit [mosaicsocietyofphiladelphia.org](http://mosaicsocietyofphiladelphia.org).

#### **PHILADELPHIA'S MAGIC GARDENS**

Philadelphia's Magic Gardens (PMG) is a mosaicked visionary art environment, gallery, and community arts center that preserves, interprets, and provides access to Isaiah Zagar's unique mosaic art environment and his public murals. The PMG site, Zagar's largest artwork, includes a fully tiled indoor space and a massive outdoor mosaic sculpture garden that spans half a block on Philadelphia's famous South Street. Inside, visitors can view folk art statues, bicycle wheels, colorful glass bottles, Zagar's hand-made tiles, and thousands of glittering mirrors. The installation pays tribute to Zagar's artistic influences, along with community and personal experiences. Open to visitors daily, PMG has become a unique Philadelphia destination, hosting year-round, low-cost public programs within its own distinctive venue and the surrounding community. PMG, a nonprofit organization, inspires creativity and community engagement by educating the public about folk, mosaic, and visionary art. For more information, visit [philadelphiamagicgardens.org](http://philadelphiamagicgardens.org).

###