

### WHAT'S INCLUDED:

- A brief introduction to the mosaic process and materials used at Philadelphia's Magic Gardens (PMG)
- Reading materials about mosaics
- Activity Sheets and lesson plans
- Online resources for other mosaic and tile organizations
- Books about mosaics, tiles, and the traditions surrounding them
- Children's books inspired by mosaics
- Educational and crafting videos related to mosaics

---

### INTRODUCTION

Founding artist Isaiah Zagar (born 1939) uses many different types of materials to embellish the inside and outside walls of Philadelphia's Magic Gardens (PMG). We refer to most of the work Isaiah has done at PMG as mosaics. A [mosaic](#) is a picture or pattern produced by arranging small colored pieces of hard material, such as stone, tile, or glass. The first mosaics date back to between 3000 and 2500 BC in Mesopotamia. Mosaics were also used as an art form in Ancient Greek and Roman civilizations.

Isaiah Zagar is a trained artist but a self-trained mosaicist. His unique style is known as the Zagar Method. It is a step-by-step process that also includes elements of improvisation and chance. Isaiah's mosaics include salvaged and recycled materials, such as tiles, mirrors, dishes, and bottles, as well as handmade tiles and pieces of international folk art.



MOSAICKED WALL IN PHILADELPHIA'S MAGIC GARDENS' COURTYARD



ISAIAH ZAGAR MOSAICKING A WALL IN THE LOWER LEVEL OF PHILADELPHIA'S MAGIC GARDENS

# PMG RESOURCES

- [An Educational Guide to Philadelphia's Magic Gardens](#), a brief overview of PMG history, materials, references and influences
  - [Tiling & Grouting: The Zagar Method Pack](#), a collection of seven step-by-step videos led by Isaiah, along with a companion booklet (both printed and PDF) and a PMG sticker
- 
- 

## PMG ACTIVITY SHEETS

- [Make Your Own Mosaic](#), a page that can be colored, cut up, and reassembled into a mosaic
  - [Zagar Mosaic Process](#), a coloring sheet, available in [Spanish](#) and English, that teaches the Zagar Method step by step
- 
- 

## PMG LESSON PLANS

- [Mosaic Messages](#), a lesson plan that teaches students how to think critically about the environment and their impact on their community through paper mosaic techniques; recommended for grades 3-6, but can be adapted for other ages
  - [The Repurposed](#), a lesson plan based on the French Dada artist Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968) whose artworks inspired Isaiah to use recycled objects in nontraditional ways; recommended for grades 9-12, but can be adapted for other ages
- 
- 

## FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Society of American Mosaic Artists (SAMA)</a>, a group of mosaic artists who are dedicated to educating, inspiring, and promoting excellence in mosaic arts</li><li>• <a href="#">Mosaic Society of Philadelphia (MSoP)</a>, a nonprofit organization that promotes mosaic art in the Philadelphia area</li><li>• <a href="#">The Tileworks of Bucks County</a>, a historic landmark and “working history” museum in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, where handmade tiles are still produced following the methods of founder Henry Chapman Mercer; also known as Moravian Pottery &amp; Tile Works</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Why Tile®</a>, a joint initiative of tile industry installers, contractors, manufacturers, distributors, and retailers to provide education and information about tile</li><li>• <a href="#">Tile Heritage Foundation</a>, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting an awareness and appreciation of ceramic surfaces in the United States</li></ul> |
|---|---|

## BOOKS

- [5000 Years of Tiles](#) by Hans Van Lemmen, a comprehensive, full-color exploration of tile art and production worldwide, ranging from ancient Greece to the present day; Isaiah Zagar mosaics are featured on page 265
  - [The Tile Book](#) by Terry Bloxham, presents the development of tiles, from their earliest mass production in Europe in the 13th century to today
  - [Mosaic Techniques & Traditions](#) by Sonia King, a look at the artistry, tools, materials, and techniques used in mosaic-making around the world
- 
- 

## BOOKS FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES

- [My Mosaic Alphabet Book](#) by Debbie Bowen and mosaic artist Jim Bowen (ages 3-6; 2016)
- [Z is for Zebra: A Mosaic Menagerie](#) by Judith Caseley (ages 5-8; 2019)

## VIDEOS

- A short video about [the Zagar Method](#)
  - A look at the unique way Isaiah uses [mirror and reflection](#) in his mosaic work
  - A video that highlights some of the [recycled objects](#) used in the creation of PMG
  - [A short talk](#) about where Isaiah gets his materials
- 
- 

## CRAFTING VIDEOS

- [Paper mosaics](#), learn to create simple mosaics using materials from home
- [Lasagna mosaics](#), use pasta and shelving paper to make mosaics that look like stained glass
- [Mini tile mosaic activity](#), make a mosaic using school glue and colored sand (you can also use glitter!)
- [Mosaic medallions](#), make a miniature mosaic inside a jar lid

