

# Summertime Mosaic Tray

*Design, Fabrication, and Text by Melanie Churchill*

When summer's warmth begins to return, its time to sit back, relax, and sip cool drinks on the patio. This mosaic tray will provide a welcome way to carry whatever you need to just about anyplace you want to go. Or display it indoors as a welcome reminder of all the wonderful times you had during the summer months when winter comes back again.

## **Uroboros Glass**

60-39, Cobalt Blue/Red Orange/Green for Shorts and Flower, Scrap

66-298, Gold-Fuchsia/Raspberry, for Bikini and Flowers, Scrap

00-74, Emerald/Spring/Light Green for Grass, 1/4 Sq. Ft.

65-540, Sky Blue/White/Cobalt Blue/Purple for Sky, 1/2 Sq. Ft.

60-915, Golden Amber/Yellow/White for Clothespins, Scrap

## **Other Glass Required**

Ceramic Plate or Sheet Glass of Your Choice for Towel, Scrap

## **Other Materials Required**

White Grout Blue and Green Colorant

Weldbond® Masking Tape

3/32" Brass Tube Mosaic Wheeled Nippers

13-3/4" x 10-1/2" Wood Tray

Particle Mask Latex Gloves



## **Step 1**

*Seal the wood.*



If your tray is made of unfinished wood as mine is, it is important to seal it to prevent the wood from warping due to moisture in the grout. You can seal the wood by mixing one part PVA glue, such as Weldbond, with one part water. Mix thoroughly, paint it onto the tray, and allow it to dry. If the wood is varnished or painted, rough up the surface first with sandpaper.

## **Step 2**

*Select the glass.*



For the bathing suits and towel, you will want to select glass with interesting patterns and color variations, since they are your focal points. I chose to use a plate for my towel, but you can choose to use glass or even ceramic tile.

## **Step 3**

*Cut out the focal points, making sure to wear eye protection for this step.*



You can easily cut out the shorts in one piece using a glass saw. Or modify the design so it can be easily cut out using traditional glass cutting tools or mosaic wheeled nippers.

#### Step 4

*Cut the background glass into 3/4" strips.*



Using a ruler as your guide, score the background glass with a glass cutter and then run the score with your running pliers.

#### Step 5

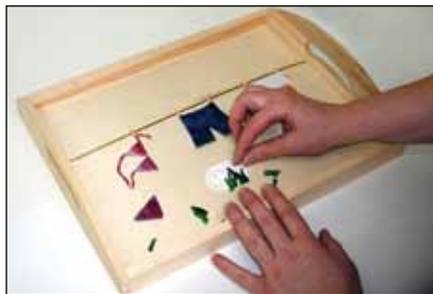
*Nip the strips into pieces.*



Using mosaic wheeled nippers, you can easily cut the background glass into various shapes. To create the shard-like grass pieces, hold the wheeled nippers at an angle. Create the triangular sky pieces by holding the nippers straight up and down. Play around with the way you hold the nippers to see the different kinds of shapes you can create. Varying the shape of the glass pieces in your project will not only create interest but will also allow you to show movement and direction.

#### Step 6

*Glue your pieces down.*



Starting with the focal point, apply Weldbond to the back of your pieces and press into position. Once the clothes are adhered, you can add the clothesline by cutting brass tubing and gluing it into place. Use wire cutters or a saw to cut the brass tubing. Be sure to leave spaces between the sections of brass rod for your clothespins, which are created by snipping off small pieces of glass with your mosaic nippers.

To adhere the background pieces, I like to paint the glue onto a workable section (about a 3" square) and then press the pre-nipped pieces into place, leaving about 1/8" in between pieces and around the edge of your design. You may need to nip off some additional small parts of the glass for a better fit. You can use small scraps of glass to create the flowers in the grass.

#### Step 7

*Tape around the area to be grouted.*



Use masking tape to control the placement of the grout and protect areas that you want to remain ungrouted. This is especially important when you are using multiple grout colors.

#### Step 8

*Mix the grout and add colorant.*



Always wear a respirator when mixing grout. The grout contains Portland cement, so avoid prolonged skin contact by wearing latex gloves. Also be sure to always wear eye protection. Mix 2 or 3 tablespoons of water to each 1/2 cup of dry grout and mix to the consistency of brownie batter. The grout should have enough body so that it doesn't ooze but should not be so dry that it is crumbly or hard to press into spaces between glass pieces. Add more water to thin or more dry grout to thicken.

Once you achieve the correct consistency, add colorant a little at a time until you reach the desired color. Please note that as the grout dries, it will lighten in color. Be sure to make enough colored grout for the area that you need to cover, because it is difficult to match an already created grout color. Unused mixed grout cannot be saved.

#### Step 9

*Clean off excess grout while wearing latex gloves.*



The grout is used to fill the space in between the glass pieces. You can remove excess grout from the top of the glass with a rubber spatula or folded paper towel. Be sure to not dip into the grout line. Then, use a paper towel to buff off the thin layer of dried-up grout. To loosen any remaining grout, use a damp paper towel or sponge.

## Step 10

Seal your project.



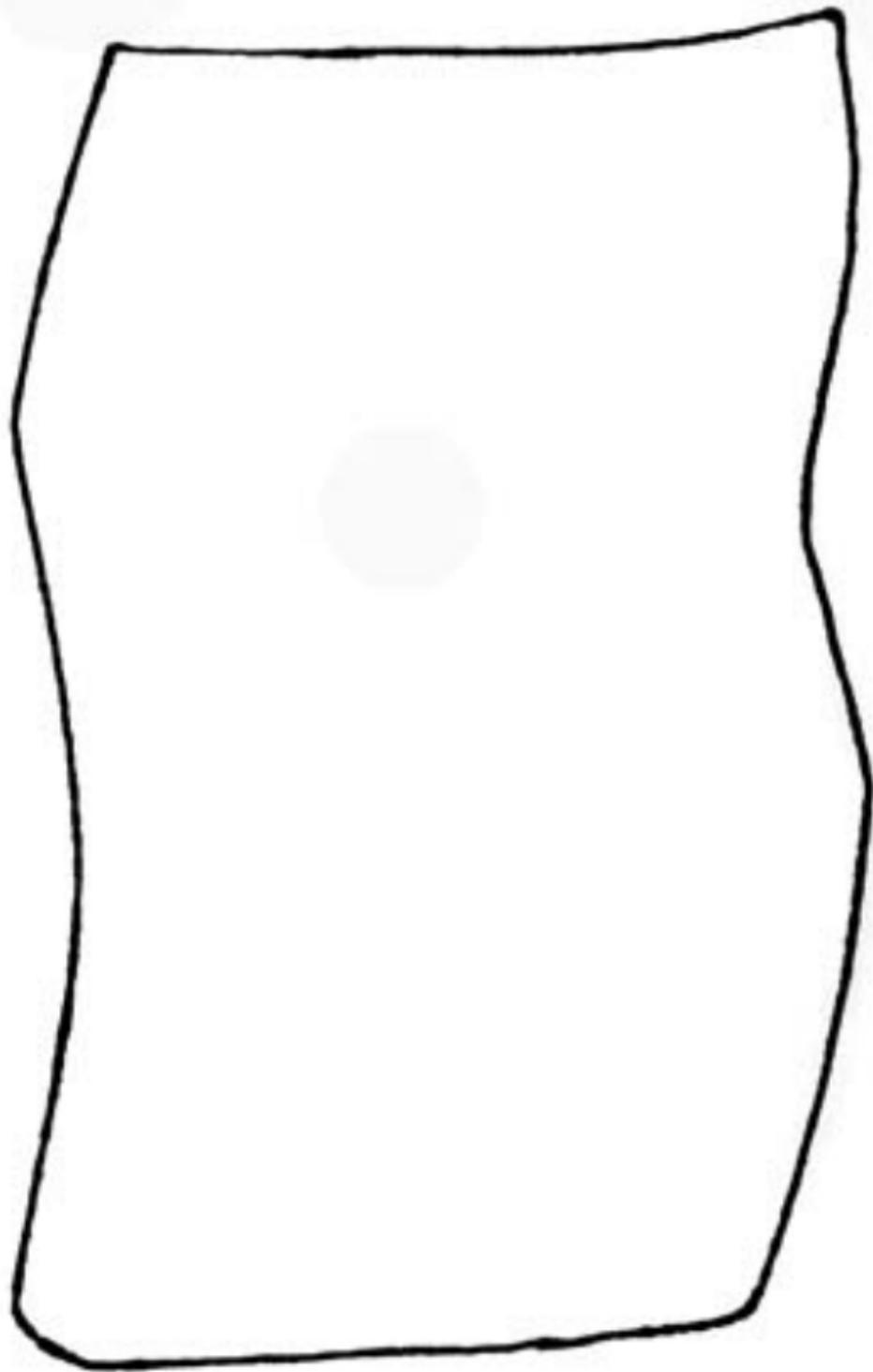
To protect the grout on your tray from any spills, apply a grout sealant following the manufacturer's directions. **GPO**

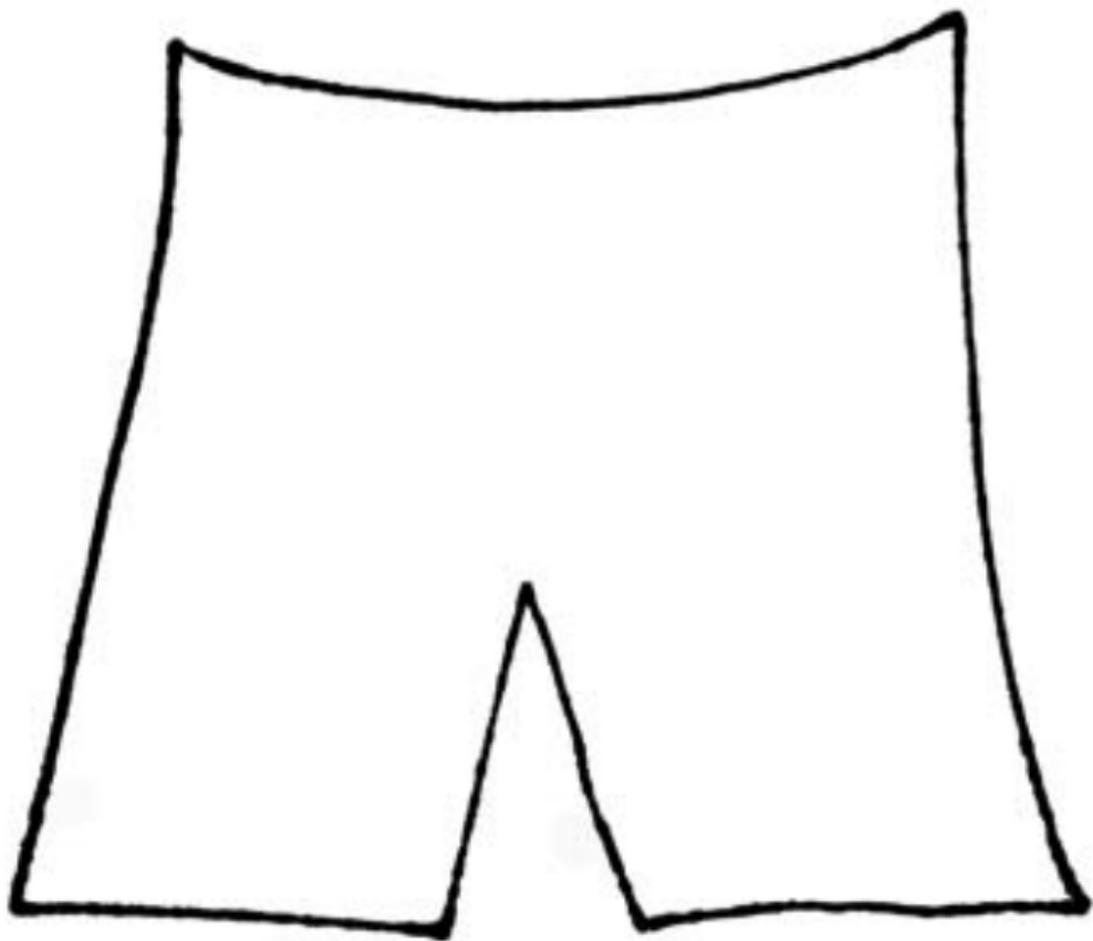
*Michigan native, Melanie Churchill, is an accomplished stained glass, fusing, and metal clay artist, but her true passion is mosaics. It's a discipline that fits well into this busy working mom's lifestyle.*

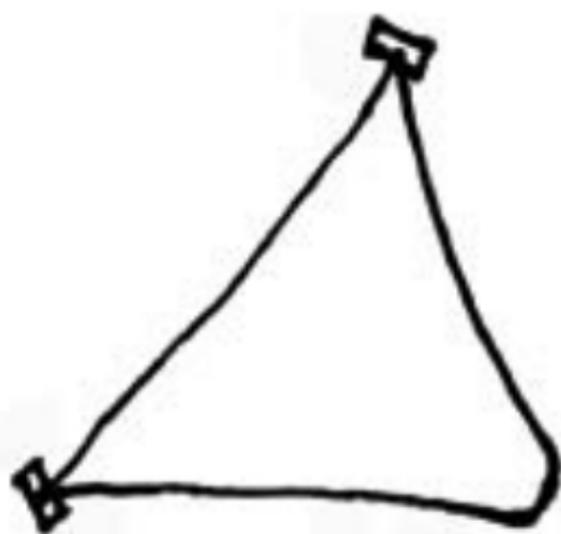
*As an instructor, Melanie has been introducing people to the world of mosaics for close to a decade. Her work has been featured in the book, Mosaic Art Home Décor for Beginners, as well as extensively throughout the Delphi Glass catalog. In addition, she has served as a guest instructor for the Michigan Art Educators annual conference.*

*Melanie's skilled use of color turns even the most simple design into a beautiful piece of artwork. You can see more of Melanie's work or sign up for one of her classes at [www.Delphiglass.com](http://www.Delphiglass.com).*









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