



Spring Newsletter

We have lots to share in our latest newsletter! Our studio has been abuzz with activity, with our remarkable participant artists pouring their hearts and souls into creating beautiful mosaic masterpieces.

In this newsletter, the profound impact of our Veteran's classes is beautifully illustrated through the words of Yvette, the daughter of Army Veteran Richard. Her touching account reminds us of the transformative power of art and community.

We're also thrilled to unveil a stunning new large-scale mural created by Piece by Piece artists for LA Family Housing's new veterans housing project. This vibrant artwork not only beautifies their space but also serves as a symbol of hope and unity for those transitioning into stable housing.

Our commitment to supporting our artists' journey is one you can be a part of when you commission our awards, murals and gifts. When you do so, you help create new opportunities and a fresh start for Piece by Piece artists.

In the spirit of renewal, we're excited to reintroduce Hugo, a Piece by Piece artist who has returned to Piece by Piece workshops after a hiatus. His story is a testament to the enduring bond between our community and the life-changing potential of art.

Curious about what our artists have been learning in classes last month? You can find out in the article below.

But before you immerse yourself in our stories, don't forget to share your thoughts with us by taking our newsletter survey. Your feedback helps us tailor our content to better serve you and our community.

I want to extend my gratitude to you for your support of Piece by Piece. Together, we are supporting a community of creativity, resilience, and hope, one mosaic piece at a time.

Warmly,

Sophie Alpert
Founder



Creative Forces

Richard's Story

Written by Yvette, daughter of Richard.

My father, Richard, has been coming to Piece by Piece's Creative Forces Mosaic Classes since the moment he saw the flyer up at the VA last year. He has raved about it since the first class and it was all he wanted to talk about.

About 3 months ago, my father was diagnosed with stage 4 pancreatic cancer. As you can imagine, this has been heartbreaking for all of us but in the midst... the mosaic class is what has brought him joy and a feeling of grounding. So much so that he has told every doctor that he has a standing appointment on Fridays that he is not able to miss unless absolutely necessary.

This class has not only brought him joy, it has been central to his coping with his diagnosis. He has found that working outside at the golf course to be one of the most peaceful things he has done in his life. The location was arranged by Village for Vets. He enjoys the mosaic work so much that he has purchased tools, glass, beads and other items so that he can continue this at home.

He shows pictures of his work to friends, family and the many doctors he sees. He is proud of the class project and wants to see it hanging at the 500 building. He has hung up his work and placed plants in the pots he has created. This work has been therapeutic for him in ways that cannot be measured.

Lastly, the most important part of this class has been the community he has found. The women that run this program have literally become his friends and support. Dawn and Wendy have checked up on him outside of the class and are so attentive to him. They have been a witness to his life and have offered moral support each and every week. They have also invited me to join in on the class and this has been very special for both of us. This time will be a treasured memory for both of us.

This class has been transformative for my father. He has learned a new skill, it is in the most beautiful setting and he has found a community.



New Mural

A vibrant mosaic mural has been installed in the courtyard of the newly constructed My Angel apartments by [L.A. Family Housing](#). The space is designated for veterans and individuals transitioning out of homelessness. This project is a testament to the power of art in transforming spaces and lives. It was brought to life by the dedicated artists of [Piece by Piece](#), a nonprofit organization known for its commitment to providing art opportunities to underserved communities.

The mural, a ten-foot by eleven-foot masterpiece, draws inspiration from the picturesque hills and poppy fields of California. Crafted from an eclectic mix of recycled ceramics and stained glass, it stands as a symbol of resilience and beauty, echoing the organization's ethos of finding value in the overlooked and discarded. Artistic Director [Dawn Mendelson](#) shared her thoughts on the project, stating, "Seeing beauty in the broken and discarded materials is meaningful in several ways. It's sustainable, sparks creativity, and each piece tells a story. It's like a treasure hunt, finding the perfect shard to bring our poppies and hills to life."

Under the leadership of Dawn and Lead Instructor [Luz Mack](#), the Piece by Piece team embarked on an eight-month journey from conception to installation. The project was a collaborative effort, featuring the talents of artists [Andrea](#), [Ricardo](#), [Victor](#), [Norma](#), [Luz Mack](#), [Ninive](#), [Jose](#), [Dawn Mendelson](#), [Vicki](#), [Margarita](#), [John](#), [Hilda](#), [Jonathan](#), and [June](#). For Andrea, John V., Ricardo, and Margarita, this was their first foray into a large-scale project, an opportunity to grow as artists and hone their mosaic skills.

Read the full story [here](#).

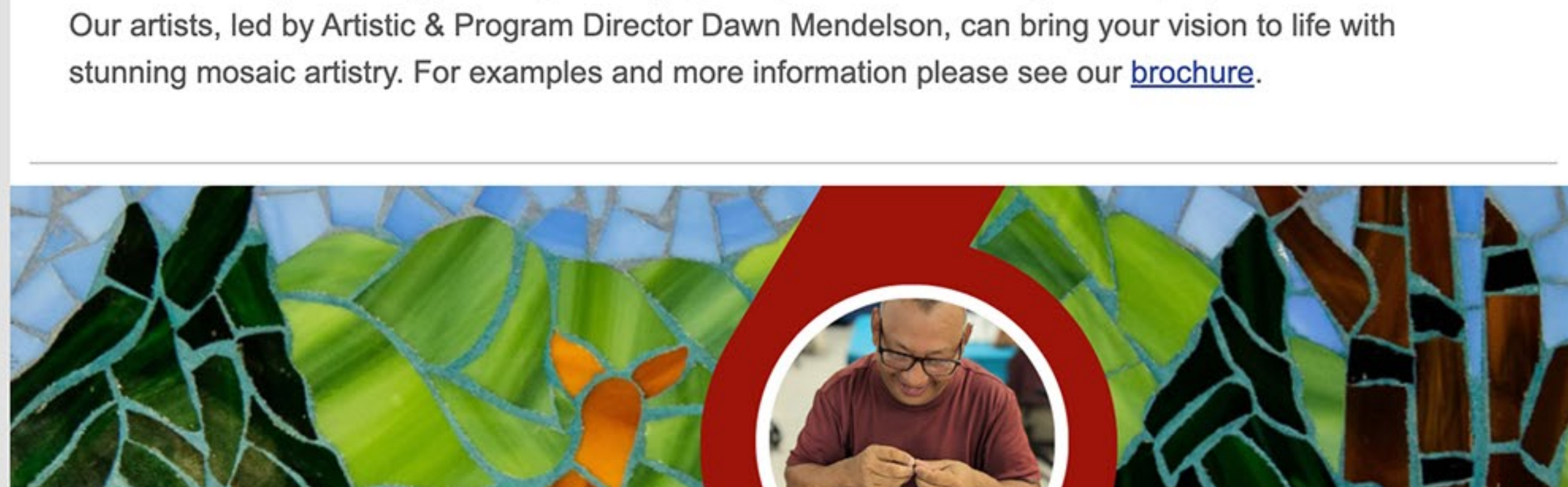


Awards & Commissions

Over the past two years, Piece by Piece's social enterprise has grown over 40%, supporting more artists than ever before. We are actively looking for commissions and projects to ensure artists have an opportunity to work to their capacity. We invite you to consider Piece by Piece for awards at upcoming events, corporate gifts, and art work of any size for your business or home.

Awards: Make your next event more meaningful by commissioning a recognition award from Piece by Piece. Whether it's for a corporate gala or to honor someone special, our awards can be customized with logos, artwork, and messages. Each piece is unique and can reflect the theme or imagery of your event. You can see examples of the amazing awards Piece by Piece artists have created [here](#).

Commissions: Have a vision for a mosaic masterpiece? Inquire with us for pricing on custom projects such as building facades, gardens, meeting spaces, restaurants/cafes, lobbies, or private residences. Our artists, led by Artistic & Program Director Dawn Mendelson, can bring your vision to life with stunning mosaic artistry. For examples and more information please see our [brochure](#).



Hugo

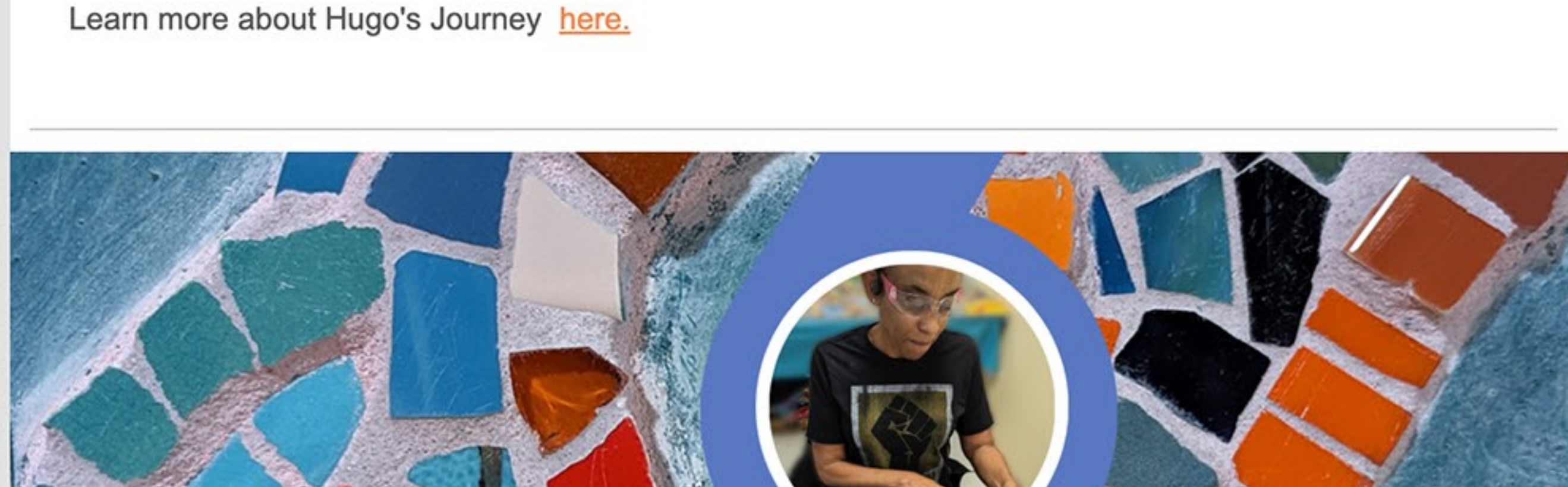
In 2010, [Hugo](#) discovered Piece by Piece through his social worker, who had learned about the program from Piece by Piece's founder, [Sophie](#). Intrigued, he joined the classes in Skid Row and eventually transitioned to a more full-time role at our current location after a few months. Over the course of four years, Hugo diligently acquired certificates in cutting, grouting, and design/adamento. This paved the way for him to contribute to the small commissions team, marking the beginning of his mosaic journey.

Eventually, Hugo began to work on some larger projects. Looking back, Hugo's favorite projects were the [Villas at Grover](#), a significant large-scale endeavor that he fondly remembers alongside the [Entangled Bank](#). In a [previous interview](#), Hugo shared insights into his mosaic art creation process and expressed what being part of Piece by Piece meant to him. Today, we talked with him to see what has changed over the years and how he has grown as an artist and person.

Regarding his artistic style, Hugo noted, "I used to like geometric, and that is still true." Although he continues to favor cutting in straight lines, he has embraced the use of a glass scorer, allowing him to incorporate more curves and intricate designs, as exemplified in his [Adventurous Deer](#) piece. Various cutting tools, Hugo enjoys crafting dynamic and engaging pieces. His current focus is on incorporating different materials into a single piece, a challenging task that requires varied cutting tools and techniques for each part.

He acknowledges that making the art flow seamlessly is now more challenging but relishes the learning process. Hugo's next artistic venture involves exploring pique assiette, a mosaic form that utilizes broken plates, pots, vases, and irregular shapes to create unique pieces.

Learn more about Hugo's Journey [here](#).



Focus on Andamento

In February, Piece by Piece artists turned their focus to andamento, the visual flow and direction in a mosaic artwork. This technique helps to create patterns and movement, making a more cohesive piece. For example, in a landscape artwork, the sky on a windy day might have undulating and swirling lines of glass, while in a calm version, the sky might be straight lines of glass.

As an exercise, students practiced by creating a single line and building a piece from there. Inspired by a workshop with visiting artist Kelley Knickerbocker, instructor Ellen Dinerman worked with the group to design their own unique visions in either glass, tile or both. Every piece was completely different and wonderful.

Through examples and several virtual presentations, Ellen was able to share a great variety of examples, both classic and modern. The topic of andamento is wide ranging and takes a lot of practice, but the participant artists are always up to the challenge. "Rhythm is at the heart of any art, and working with andamento helps the artist to guide what the viewer sees," said artist Vicki.

With each workshop, we aim to provide both inspiration and education. Artist Andrea enjoys learning the different aspects of mosaic: "I appreciate learning the guidelines, which helps me to make choices in my artwork." June, another Piece by Piece artist, agrees: "It's challenging, but I always enjoying learning more and improving my skills and vision."

Read the full article [here](#).



Awards & Commissions

Commission a recognition award for your corporate gala or to honor someone special. Artwork may be customized to include imagery or a theme specific to your event.

We hope you enjoy the this newsletter. As a part of our efforts to produce a quality newsletter we are asking you to take a [brief survey](#) to let us know your thoughts.

If you have cardboard boxes or packing bubbles that are in good shape, please consider donating them to Piece by Piece. To arrange to drop them off, please [email us](#).

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