



## A Passion for Painting with Glass

by Gwyn Kaitis

When Yulia Hanansen wants a critique of her mosaic work, she just calls upon her parents Angele and Yakov Hanansen, also mosaic artists, whom Yulia calls her unofficial advisory board. Although it wasn't planned this way, Hanansen and her parents have separate successful mosaic art studios in Baltimore, Maryland, and New York, New York, respectively. She and her parents, however, have quite different styles.

### Bringing Painterly Techniques to Mosaic Art

Hanansen's path to mosaic art ultimately crossed that of her parents only after she received her Master of Fine Arts in printmaking and drawing. Having grown up around mosaic art, she never thought that she, too, would end up with her own mosaic art studio someday. However, as an adult visiting her parents one day, Hanansen realized that she could say some things in the mosaic medium that weren't possible in printmaking and painting. She says that her passion for those mediums now enriches her main passion, mosaic art.

The mosaic art form provides Hanansen with a unique way of expressing her ideas, and since not many people do mosaic, she feels that it is a field that is wide open to experimentation. Using a layered glass mosaic technique, where pieces are glued on top of each other to create depth and texture that takes the viewer to another dimension, Hanansen's focus currently is on cosmic and natural phenomena. Influenced by global forces of nature and climate change, her current series includes such juxtapositions as hurricanes in the desert.

Of the thousands of ideas that feed Hanansen's mosaic passion, she uses a variety of mediums to express as many as possible, eventually distilling them down to those that she thinks will translate well to mosaic. She also sometimes "doodles" in glass, making small spontaneous works in a short period of time. Stained glass is her favorite medium due to the ability to extrude it from the flat surface through layering and to take advantage of the luminosity that results. The "brushstrokes" she uses are small, deliberately cut pieces of glass, not shards or offcuts, as they may at first appear. Her love of the material is palpable, and her vision is expansive. She states that she'd rather have "1,000 ideas and make three pieces of art than have no ideas, which results in no art."

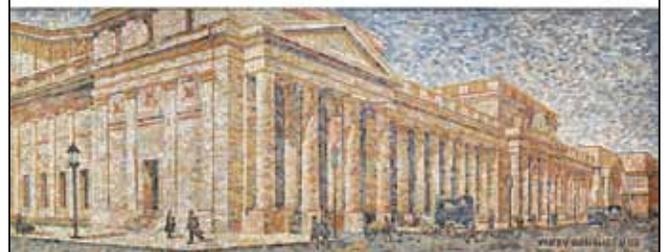
Hanansen's artwork has been exhibited in numerous shows including Mosaic Arts International, the annual exhibition presented by the Society of American Mosaic Artists (SAMA). She also devotes much time to teaching workshops around the country and doing commissioned pieces. More of her work can be viewed at [www.mosaicsphere.com](http://www.mosaicsphere.com).



Artist Julia Hanansen with her Jupiter: Great Red Spot mosaic. The work won Best of Show at Mosaic Arts International 2011.



Hanansen's Displaced Hurricane, smalti and stained glass, 2014.



History Preserved in 11 natural stone mosaic panels created by Yakov Hanansen for the new entrance to Penn Station, New York City. Commissioned by NJ Transit, 2007–2009.



Angele and Yakov Hanansen.

### SAMA's Commitment to Artist Education

The Society of American Mosaic Artists, a non-profit organization of over 1,200 members, is the largest mosaic arts organization in the world. SAMA, which is dedicated to educating, inspiring, and promoting excellence in the mosaic arts, will present Hanansen and her parents to speak of their family journey in mosaic art at the upcoming annual American Mosaic Summit, which will be held March 11–14, 2015, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Summit attracts attendees from all over the world and includes every level of expertise from beginners to professional artists. Over 500 people attended the 2014 Summit.

Much can be learned at The Summit, which features educational programs, presentations, a marketplace of mosaic supplies, tours, and networking opportunities. Additionally, a wide range of pre-conference workshops focused on increasing technical and professional skills are offered each year in the days prior to the start of the conference. Half-day, full-day, and multiple-day workshops are taught by professional artists, the topics of which are selected to provide a wide range of choices for conference attendees at every level of development.

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Visit [www.americanmosaics.org](http://www.americanmosaics.org) for more information about the Society of American Mosaic Artists and the 2015 American Mosaic Summit.

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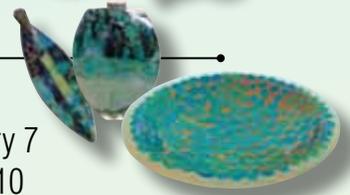
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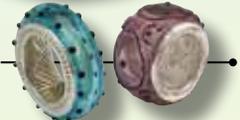
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