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A Mosaic Grows in Pittsboro

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by Francis DiNardo

It was May 2014 and I was walking from my car parked behind [Joyful Jewel](#) to MY bench in front of [Virlie's](#) when I noticed what appeared to be 2 women scrawling chalk graffiti on the outside wall of [Beggars and Choosers](#) (now [Screaming for Vintage](#)). As a native of New Yorker I had strong feelings about graffiti so I made it a point to insert myself into this situation. I didn't realize at that moment how this event would change the course of my summer and result in a beautiful, unique mosaic on the face of Pittsboro!

Building owners Pam and Snuffy Smith had



commissioned a work of art to be placed on the side of their building. The two local artists — sculptor and bluegrass musician [LaNelle Davis](#) and artist [Beth Goldston](#) — were starting work on an elaborate mosaic composed from pieces of broken pottery and shattered mirrors. The material was selected because of its ability to reflect sunlight during the day and the headlights of cars going around the Pittsboro traffic circle at night. The effect is stunning!

As the mosaic gradually took shape over the summer I made it a point to stop there at least two times a week in order to monitor the progress. I shortly realized that the project was much more than the creation of a mosaic: it was also a piece of performance art. [LaNelle](#) and [Beth](#) entertained a constant flow of curious people who were fascinated by the ongoing work. I was deeply impressed by the artists' patient responses to the never ending questions, most of

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which were the same questions asked over and over again. I not only delighted in taking photos of the work, but I took many pictures of the people who stopped to watch and talk.



The design features a beautiful blue stylized bird rising from the ground amid colorful flowers and vines as it

wraps around the corner of the building. Every time I look at that mosaic I imagine it continuing to grow around the front corner of the building and extending itself across the facades of the rest of the buildings on Hillsboro Street. I even imagine the theme being incorporated into the sidewalks of Hillsboro Street that are slated for reconstruction in the near future. Okay so I'm a dreamer but I think this mosaic could serve as the beginning of a unique, iconic work of art which would distinguish the Pittsboro business district from that of any other town.

This impressive work of art will stand for years as one of Pittsboro's unique features and will serve as an attraction that will draw people from all over the area. If you haven't yet seen it then you need to stop and look at and feel this beautiful creation.

Have you seen the other examples of Lanelle Davis' mosaic work? Tell us about it. There's even another wall mural in Pittsboro by LaNelle Davis. Do you know where it is?

October 28th, 2017

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