THE USE OF CERAMICS AS AN AESTHETIC ELEMENT IN DURBAN ARCHITECTURE

(1914 -2012)

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DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTERS DEGREE IN TECHNOLOGY: FINE ART IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FINE ART AND JEWELLERY DESIGN, DURBAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY.

I declare that this dissertation is my own work and has not been submitted previously for any degree or examination through any other institution.

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APPROVED FOR FINAL SUBMISSION

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ABSTRACT

This paper documents and evaluates the use of ceramics as an aesthetic architectural element in Durban from 1914-2012 with special reference to James Hall (1916-2006), Andrew Walford (b.1942) and Jane du Rand (b.1969). These artists were selected because their work demonstrates a wide range of the use of decorative tiles and mosaics as aesthetic elements in Durban architecture over a period of more than fifty years. Reference is made to the historical use of tiles and mosaics as aesthetic architectural elements in Durban from 1914-1955 in order to provide a context to an investigation and evaluation of the contribution of Hall, Walford and du Rand to the use of tiles and mosaics as an aesthetic architectural element in Durban.

The paper begins by highlighting the importance of this study, discusses the role of ceramic architectural adornment and defines terminology for the purpose of this research. In addition an explanation of the research methodology used, research questions and literature review is provided.
The study is contextualised through an overview of the historical background of the use of ceramics (tiles and mosaics) as an aesthetic element in architecture. The importance of the use of ceramic elements in relation to architecture, as well as the different techniques and methods of production, are highlighted and related to contemporary practice. The overview provides insight into how the use of ceramic elements in the past has influenced the approach of contemporary practice.

My contribution to the use of mosaics as an aesthetic architectural element in Durban and my art practice, in the form of an installation titled *passage* is discussed and evaluated.
The paper concludes by noting that the historical use of tiles and mosaics as aesthetic elements in architecture persists in contemporary art practice. However, the methods of tiled mosaic production and tiled mosaic techniques have been revolutionised extensively.
It is evident that, the use of ceramics as an aesthetic element in Durban architecture reflects, both a strong European design influence and a distinctive local identity.

PREFACE

The following conventions have been used in this dissertation:

- The Harvard method of referencing has been used in the Bibliography
- Double indentations have been applied to the entire document with one line spacing indicating direct quotes
- " – " have been used for direct quotations
- ' – ' have been used for a quotations within another quotation
- Titles of publications are in *italics*
- Titles of artworks have been rendered in bold
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INTRODUCTION:

The aim of this dissertation is to document and evaluate the use of ceramics as an aesthetic element in Durban architecture (1914-2012) with special reference to James Hall (1916-2006), Andrew Walford (b.1942) and Jane du Rand (b.1969).

The study is important for two reasons. Firstly, the choice of topic is closely related to my artistic practice. Since graduating with a Bachelors Degree of Technology: Fine Art, majoring in ceramics, I have been involved in a number of commissions using tiles and mosaics as aesthetic architectural elements. A number of these commissions were done as part of a team working with architect and artist Jane du Rand. In addition, my art practice has focused on the use of ceramics in conjunction with architectural elements in the form of an exhibition titled *Passage*.

Secondly, there is a lack of documentation and literature in this area of research, which forms a vital part of Durban's heritage. The study of the selected artists' work will highlight their influence in raising the status of ceramics as an art form in Durban and in addressing this knowledge gap.

For the purpose of this study, ceramic architectural elements shall be understood to include decorative tiles and mosaics. The term aesthetic, in the context of this research, refers to the visual enhancement brought to architectural forms by the use of ceramic architectural elements. David Hamilton (1978:9) speaks of how decorative ceramics "meant more than just the trading of fancies, when it was integrated into an architectural activity concerned with the visual quality of architecture as well as the economy of building".

David Brett (1992:1) stated that "ornamentation was what confirmed the particular style of a building". The decoration of a building was therefore given great importance, especially when deciding on the appropriate decorative finish.

Owen Jones (1856) further emphasised the importance of architectural ornamentation by stating that:

> Although ornament is most properly only an accessory to architecture, and should never be allowed to usurp the place of structural features, or to overload or disguise them, it is in all cases the very soul of an architectural monument.

The artists James Hall (1916-2006), Andrew Walford (b.1942) and Jane du Rand (b.1969) have been selected for discussion because their work demonstrates a wide range of the use of decorative tiles and mosaics as aesthetic elements in Durban architecture over a period of more than fifty years.

James Oliver Hall studied in London at both the Slade and the Camberwell School of Art. His many public works on Durban architecture erase the dividing line between art and craft, using stylised forms and a repertoire of geometric motifs (Verster, May 2007). Examples of his work include the Union refectory counters at the University of Kwazulu-Natal, Howard College (1962) and the ceramic panel for the Durban North Primary School (1966). Hall used a variety of tiles, from industrial tiles (façade of Stellenberg apartment, Musgrave Road) to hand painted tiles (ceramic panel for the Durban North Primary School).

Andrew Walford is one of South Africa's master potters. He draws his strength from his sensitive use of design and colour, strongly influenced by, amongst others, British potter Bernard Leach and Japanese potter Shoji Hamada (Van Graan, 1994:22). Examples of his work can be found at the Durban International Conference Centre and the Old Mutual Building in Smith Street, both of which are tile murals.

Jane du Rand is an artist and registered architect, who undertakes public and private ceramic and mosaic commissions that are integrated with architecture. Examples of her work can be seen at the Durban International Conference Centre (mosaic pathway) and The University of KwaZulu Natal Medical School Building (wall and floor mosaic). Du Rand (in Lead, 1999:34) argued that "The best thing about mosaics is that they last forever and can therefore be an integral part of a building." The fusion of art and architecture is Du Rand's particular strength.

This dissertation makes reference to the historical use of tiles and mosaics as aesthetic architectural elements. The use of ceramics as an aesthetic element in architecture can be dated as far back as 1400 B.C in the Near East (Hamilton, 1978:10).

Mosaic is the art of making patterns and pictures by arranging coloured fragments of glass, marble,

and other suitable materials and fixing them into a bed of cement (Osborne, 1970:742). The art of mosaic was a vital and independent art form in Europe until the fourteenth century, when it was gradually submerged by the dominating influence of painting, but continued to exist as a mere craft (Anthony, 1968:48). This paper will trace its growth, focusing on the early Christian period, the 5th and 6th centuries in Ravenna, Italy and the 20th century in order to provide a context for the contemporary use of ceramics as an aesthetic architectural element.

The technique of making tiles inlaid with different coloured clays was developed in the 14th century B.C. by the Egyptians, but it was in Mesopotamia and Persia that the art of tile-making first excelled and later spread through the western world (Riley, 1987:28). In *The Decorative Tile in Architecture and Interiors* (1995), Herbert and Huggins (1995:143) noted that:

> Architectural decoration in all its many forms and styles has the power to raise a building from the mundane status of a simple structure to a palace of delight with new meanings and values; few materials aid this process more than richly coloured and highly glazed ceramic tiles.

Local historical references are made to the use of tiles and mosaics as aesthetic architectural elements in Durban, such as on the **Cenotaph** (1926) on Gardiner Street that contains two angels and a white figure in loin cloth symbolizing the departure of the warrior's spirit to a heavenly abode, and the **'Gate' Retiring Rooms** (1914) on Point Road that houses a polychromatic tile mural in an Art Nouveau style (Bennett, Adams & Brusse, 1987:52). In many ways the use of ceramics as an aesthetic element of Durban architecture reflects a distinctive local identity with reference to the city's history and maritime background.

This dissertation is divided into four chapters. Chapter One consists of a brief historical overview of the use of tiles and mosaics as an aesthetic element in architecture. Chapter Two consists of a discussion of historical examples of the use of ceramics as an aesthetic element in Durban architecture 1914-1929. Chapter Three consists of an investigation of the contributions of James Hall, Andrew Walford and Jane du Rand in their use of ceramics as an aesthetic element in Durban architecture. Chapter Four discusses my contribution to the use of mosaics as an aesthetic architectural element in Durban and in my art practice. The conclusion highlights research findings and identifies new areas of research.

Literature Review

The use of ceramics as an aesthetic element in architecture was contextualised through references to historical and current texts on architectural ceramics. Key texts by Noel Riley (1987), Tony Herbert and Kathryn Huggins (1995) and Elaine Goodwin (2000) trace the rich tradition of decorative tiles and mosaics and the history and origins of the aesthetic use of ceramics in architecture.

Peter King (1999) outlines the history of relief architectural ceramics, focusing on the techniques used when creating architectural ceramics and providing solutions to problems encountered. David Hamilton (1978) describes techniques used for making tiles and other decorative features and discusses automated factory production as well as small-scale studio work by individual craftsmen. These texts provided an understanding of the different techniques used by the contemporary Durban artists under discussion.

Elaine Levin (1988) traces the origins of American ceramics from its functional origins to its more contemporary art forms. Levin (1988:319) writes how ceramics "often described for being just an ornamental art, could now affirm the decorative aspect of its character as a legitimate aesthetic concern." The influence of Abstract Expressionist painting and its confrontational size were among the many reasons for the increasingly large work produced in American tile murals (Levin, 1988:319). This source contextualizes the more sculptural interpretation of clay as an integral part of architecture.

Janet Mansfield (2005) examines the use of ornamental, architectural and large-scale ceramic works on buildings and in the landscape around the world today. She focuses on the aesthetics and relevance of work in relation to its location. The only South African artist featured in this text is Andrew Walford and his tile panel at the International Conference Centre.

There are a limited number of texts that address the work of James Hall, Andrew Walford and Jane du Rand. Elizabeth Perrill (2007) and Andrew Verster, A. (2007) discuss Hall's exhibition titled *A Life's Work: James Oliver Hall (30.09.1916 - 29.04.2006)* at the Durban Art Gallery. Schauffer, D. (1962) in the *Dome '62*, speaks about the ceramic tile panels at The Union Refectory Counters at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College, Durban.

Lantern-The Cultural Journal (February, 1994) includes an in-depth profile on Andrew Walford and his ceramic work. A Potters Tale in Africa (Wright, 2009) provides us with a historical background of Walford's career and focuses on his pottery.

In *The Property Magazine* (February, 2006), there is an article titled *Mosaic Artistry* that features Jane du Rand and her work, and includes an in-depth profile on Du Rand. This article provides historical insight into du Rand's mosaic career and includes information such as her career influences and the training of local communities in the art of mosaic. *Elle Decoration* (May/June 1999) profiles du Rand and her earlier work in an article titled *Mosaic Mastery*.

It is evident that there is a lack of literature on the aesthetic contribution to Durban architecture and the contribution by James Hall, Andrew Walford and Jane du Rand to raising the status of ceramics as an art form. This research aims to address this deficiency.

Thus the aim of this research is to document and evaluate the use of ceramics as an aesthetic element in Durban architecture in order to establish its range and contexts through the following interrelated research questions:

What is the historical context of the use of ceramics as an aesthetic element in architecture, both locally and internationally?

Who are the artists that designed and produced ceramics as an aesthetic element in Durban architecture?

Where did the selected artists study and what stylistic movements were they influenced by?

What are the different techniques used by the selected artists in the manufacture of the artworks?

In the work of the selected artists how do the ceramic elements contribute to the aesthetics of the architecture?

Research Methodology

This research utilised a qualitative methodology. Qualitative research in the context of this research will be understood to have the following characteristics as summarised by Denzin and Lincoln (2000:3-4):

> Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

Primary data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with Jane Du Rand and Andrew

Walford. Books, journal articles, internet sites, and electronic databases such as Sabinet, Proquest and Wilson's Web were used to source secondary data related to the topic.

Data from the interviews and secondary sources were analysed in the context of the use of ceramics as an aesthetic element in Durban architecture. The data collected was analysed using an inductive approach, "whereby observations of particular cases may be generalised to a class of cases. Inductive reasoning emphasizes after-the-fact explanation; theory emerges from careful consideration of the evidence (data)" (Leedy, 1997: 163). The ceramic work of the selected artists were analysed as visual texts, using formal (language pertaining to the elements of art), historical (the historical use of ceramics as an aesthetic element) and theoretical (theories relating to aesthetics) approaches.

CHAPTER 1: AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE USE OF CERAMICS AS AN AESTHETIC ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENT

There is a long history of the use of ceramics as an aesthetic element in architecture that can be dated as far back as 1400 B.C in the Near East (Hamilton, 1978:10). This chapter will confine itself to tracing its development through highlighting key examples. The importance of the use of ceramic elements in relation to architecture, as well as the different techniques and methods of production, will be highlighted and related to contemporary practice. This chapter will provide a context for a discussion of how the use of ceramic elements in the past has influenced the approach of contemporary artists.

For the purpose of this study ceramic architectural elements shall be understood to include mosaics and decorative tiles. As noted above the term aesthetic in the context of this research refers to the visual enhancement brought to architectural forms by the use of ceramic architectural elements.

1.1 Mosaics

Mosaic is an ancient art form that has flourished throughout history into contemporary times. *The Oxford Companion to Art* (Osborne, 1970:742) defined the production of a mosaic as "the art of making patterns and pictures by arranging coloured fragments of glass, marble, and other suitable materials and fixing them into a bed of cement". The *Dictionary of Art* (Turner, 1996:154) defined the technique of mosaic as "Closely spaced polychrome or monochrome particles (tesserae) of near uniform size embedded in a binder, such as mortar or cement". Anthony (1968:27) noted that "These coloured fragments when viewed at a certain distance tend to fuse together upon the retina of the eye and produce a result which may be called impressionism". In *A History of Mosaics*, Anthony (1968:27) speaks of mosaic as "primarily being an architectural decoration whether used as a pavement or upon walls" and how it cannot exist independently of an architectural setting. It is the relationship between the ceramic artwork and architecture with which this research is primarily concerned. Anthony (ibid) continued by saying that:

> On account of their possibilities for colour, mosaics have never been surpassed as architectural adornment on a large scale, and in the early Christian period, and for the greater part of the Middle Ages, throughout the Byzantine Empire and in Italy, they were the chief

murals with frescoes occupying a secondary position.

Throughout history, it has been important for the mosaic artist to take into account the architectural role of the building in order to create a successful artwork. Fischer (1971:25) elaborated on this when he said:

> The mosaic's colour and lines may crucially modify the lines and the spatial effect of a building. The decoration may work against the architecture, but it can also help to emphasize the shape of the building and of its parts, to define and divide an undefined and undivided surface, to underline the character of the building, achieving an effect not obtainable by architecture alone but only by a *Gesamtkunstwerk* in which architecture and mosaic are harmoniously integrated.

The broad, simple treatment and the tendency towards abstraction and formalisation, characteristic of all early medieval art and that of the Near East, were well suited to the technique of mosaic and to subjects which were to be seen at a distance. As a result, mosaic was used frequently as a medium, since it was best suited to dimly lighted interiors and to constantly changing surfaces, such as the curves of an apse (Anthony, 1968). In terms of the relationship between mosaic and light Anthony (1968:36) noted that: As they [mosaic] reflect so much light themselves, the light which falls on mosaics should never be too direct or too intense. The Byzantine builder directed his attention to securing just enough light for the illumination of his glistening walls.

For this reason, the great mosaic interiors such as St. Mark’s at Venice, the Florentine Baptistery, the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem (Fig 8a), and the Sicilian apses are all dimly lit.

Roger Fry (in Bovini,1978) emphasised what he called:

> The unique power of mosaic in the realisation of vision. The vibrancy of effect produced by decidedly broken colour creates a definite aesthetic stimulant which in the right surroundings quickens religious emotion.

Mosaic, therefore, had the ability to transform an environment and stimulate the unconscious mind. Aside from permanency, the glowing richness of tone is a strong attribute of mosaic.

Anthony (1968) noted that the art of mosaic was widely used up to the fourteenth century in the west, when it became overshadowed by painting, but continued to exist as a craft. This research will briefly trace its growth in the west, focusing on the early cultures of Ancient Mesopotamia, Greece, Rome, Byzantine, and the fifth and sixth centuries in Ravenna and the twentieth century.

The process of fixing mosaic into a bed of cement may be described as a kind of inlay (Osborne, 1970:742).

This method was in use in Southern Mesopotamia as early as the fourth millennium B.C. where the Sumerians covered walls with mosaics. Among the debris of houses of the al ‘Ubaid period are found cones of baked clay, shaped like pencils, that were used for wall mosaics. It was assumed that these mosaics were used instead of paint to preserve the mud plaster of the walls from the environmental effects of wind, rain and humidity (Anthony, 1968). These half-columns (Fig. 1.) unearthed in the Eanna sanctuary at Uruk (modern Warka) were more than eighty feet long. Various three toned patterns were formed on clay cones set in mud (Fischer, 1971:33). This solution of covering columns with mosaic in the form of baked clay cones both contributed to the architectonic aesthetics of monumental buildings as a permanent decoration, and provided an almost waterproof covering.
In time, animal motifs were combined with the early geometric patterns and later these were made in one piece silhouetted figures of baked clay and set against a background of cone mosaic (Anthony, 1968). The earliest known examples of tablet mosaic in an architectural context date from the early dynastic period III in Ur (c. 2600 BC). Palm-log columns (Fig. 2.) were covered in thin tesserae made of bituminous, mother-of-pearl and pink limestone (Fischer, 1971:34).

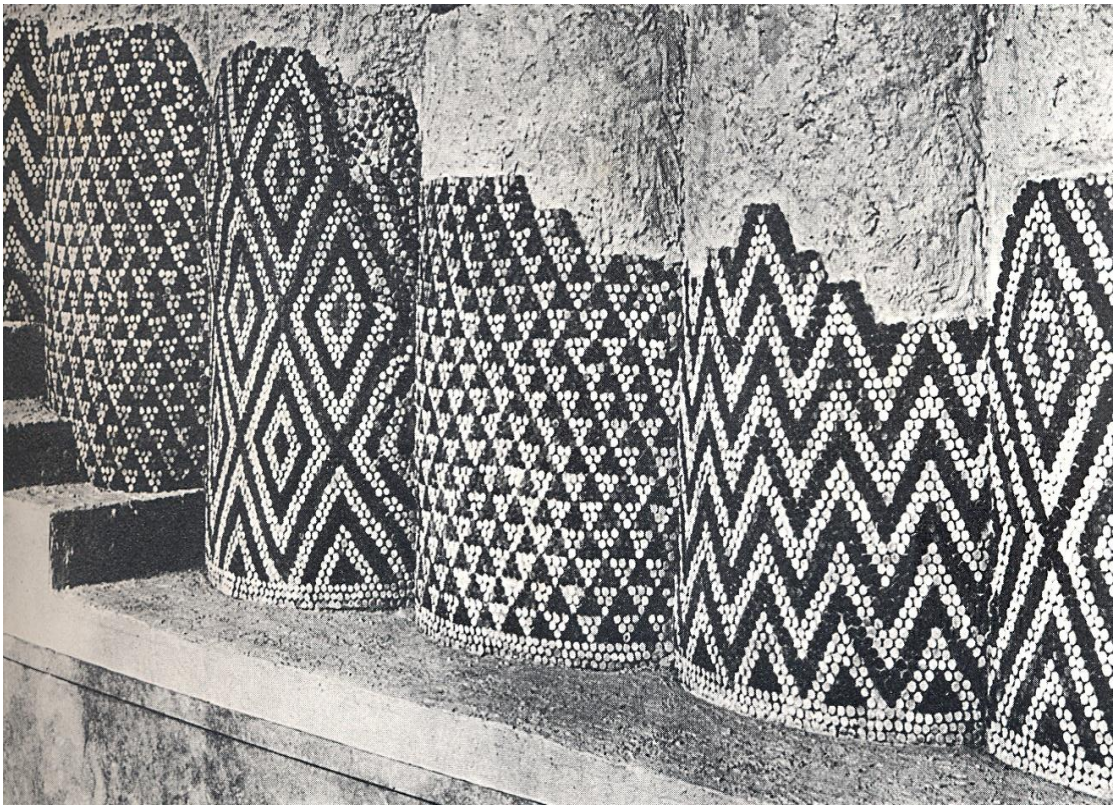

Fig.1 al ‘Ubaid period. **Half-column clay cones set in mud**. Eanna sanctuary. Uruk.

Fig.2. Early dynastic period III in Ur. **Palm-log columns covered in thin tesserae.** Bituminous, mother-of-pearl and pink limestone.

Circa 4 B.C. the Greeks and Romans used pebbles and shells to create pictorial composition. The Romans developed the mosaic as an art form, a tradition that was carried on by the Byzantines. Typically Roman subjects were scenes celebrating gods, domestic themes and geometric designs (Fig. 3a. and Fig. 3b.).

The Romans classified mosaics into several categories, according to the different kinds and shapes of the materials used. *Opus tessellatum* was composed of cubes of marble or stone, regularly placed in simple geometric patterns. *Opus vermiculatum* employed cubes of coloured marbles or glass in a more irregular way to obtain a pictorial effect. When this method was applied to walls and vaults it was called *opus musivum*. It is from these last two methods that the mural mosaics of the Early Christians developed (Anthony, 1968). Similarly, in certain examples of mosaic artworks created by du Rand and in my own practice, the last two methods are adopted in order to create a more pictorial effect.

Creating a mosaic is labour intensive and is therefore generally an expensive medium to work with. Mosaics have therefore, up to the present, been seen as symbols of status, both of wealth and of taste. With the rise of the Byzantine Empire from the 5th century onwards, centred on Byzantium (now Istanbul, Turkey), the art form took on new characteristics with mosaic artists being exempt from taxation (Goodwin, 2000). These new characteristics included Eastern influences in style and the use of special glass tesserae called *smalti*, manufactured in northern Italy. The properties of glass, with areas of shifting light and colour change, allowed an interior to become a spiritual realm, where the world of naturalism and reality was left behind. Mosaic artists exploited this characteristic of mosaics, tilting each tesserae and setting it directly into mortar to produce an uneven surface of vibrant colour (Timmons, 1971).

Fig. 3a (Diocletian period 286 - 305 AD). **Roman mosaics from a rich Roman's villa.** Piazza Armerina. Sicily.

Fig.3b 7th Century. **Roman mosaic**. Winchester City Museum, found in local house. The twisted rope border design is called "guilloche".

The mosaics of the church of Santa Costanza at Rome (The 5th or 7th century) mark the transition between those of the purely Roman antique tradition and those of the Christian period, dating from the 4th century A.D. This circular domed structure with a surrounding barrel-vault was erected by Constantine as a mausoleum for his daughter Constantia (Anthony, 1968:63).

The mosaic panel on the left apse (Fig. 4) consists of an image of Jesus Christ between Peter and Paul, in which St. Peter receives the right to govern on earth. Depicted here are Bethlehem and Jerusalem and four symbolic sheep that turn towards the Rivers of Paradise (Anthony, 1968). It is quite evident here (Fig. 4) that the artist has taken the architectural shape of the building into account when designing the mosaic, as the layout is one that follows the shape of the apse, thereby emphasising its shape.

In *Mosaic History and Technique* Fischer (1971:70) speaks of the role that mosaic played during this period. According to Fischer (1971:70), “mosaic was no longer used purely for decoration but aimed at the idealisation of the suprapersonal patrons”. Mosaic, with its stylizing qualities, was well suited to this idealisation.

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Mosaic design was influenced by the fact that church murals are usually seen from a distance. However, artists developed techniques to deal with foreshortening in higher areas of the wall, and perspectival distortions caused by the curves of vaults and apses (Fischer, 1971:71).

The art of Ravenna is associated with three great personalities, Galla Placidia (390-450), Theodoric (493-526) and Justinian (526-561). The Mausoleum of Galla Placidia was a chapel, or an oratory, erected in honour of SS. Nazarius and Celsus, dated towards the middle of the fifth century. It is a Greek cross plan with equal arms constructed of brick with a small cupola.

Fig. 4 The 5th or 7th century. **Mosaic on the left apse**. Church of Santa Costanza. Rome.

The barrel vaults of the arms of the cross with the lunettes at the ends, the drum and the cupola, are still entirely covered with their embellishment of mosaic (Anthony, 1968).The lateral arches directly beneath the dome are emphasised by being decorated with a scroll pattern of dark-blue, light-blue and white tesserae on a garnet-red ground (Fig. 5).

According to Bovini (1978: 10), “the vaulting of the arms on the axis of the chapel was not suitable for a narrative composition; ornamental motifs were used instead and the result is a decoration which is impressively architectonic”.

The scene in the lunette (Fig. 6), directly above the entrance is a pastoral landscape depicting the Good Shepherd, surrounded by six lambs (Bovini, 1978:12). The composition is impressive in terms of the balanced distribution of the lambs. According to Bovini (1978:12), “although not obvious, the heads of four lambs are placed so as to echo the curve of the lunette, and all the lines of the composition converge on the figure of Christ”. Seen as a whole, the mosaic decoration of the chapel is harmoniously integrated with the architecture and in spite of the small dimensions of the chapel the mosaics give it monumentality.

Bovini (1978:12) stated that one of the characteristics of the mosaics in Ravenna is the capacity to give the interior “an almost mystic feeling of unlimited space; even when such motifs as white blossoms and figures of Apostles in blue robes are introduced into the vaulted areas they do not destroy the harmony of decoration and architecture”.

The Dome of the Rock, the “Mosque of Omar” of the Crusaders, and sometimes called the Blue Mosque from the coloured tiles of the exterior (Fig. 7b), was built by the Caliph Abd al Melek in 691 in Jerusalem. It is a domed structure of centralised plan. An octagonal outer arcade and an inner circular arcade lead to the central space, which is covered by a cupola on a high drum. These are perhaps the finest examples of purely decorative mosaics in existence. The whole scheme is perfectly unified and well adapted to the architecture.

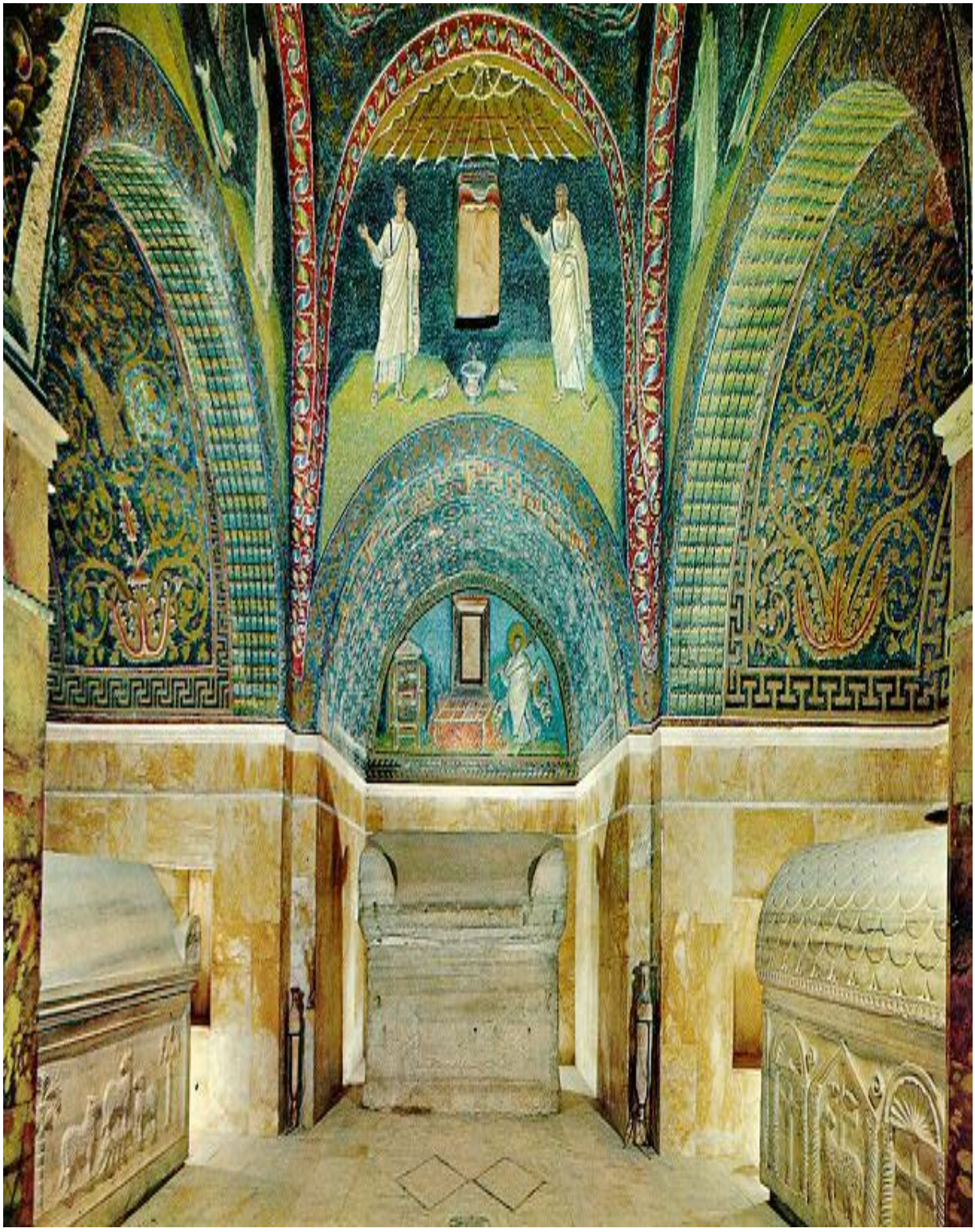

Fig. 5 Middle of the 5th century. **Mosaic of the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia**. Ravenna.

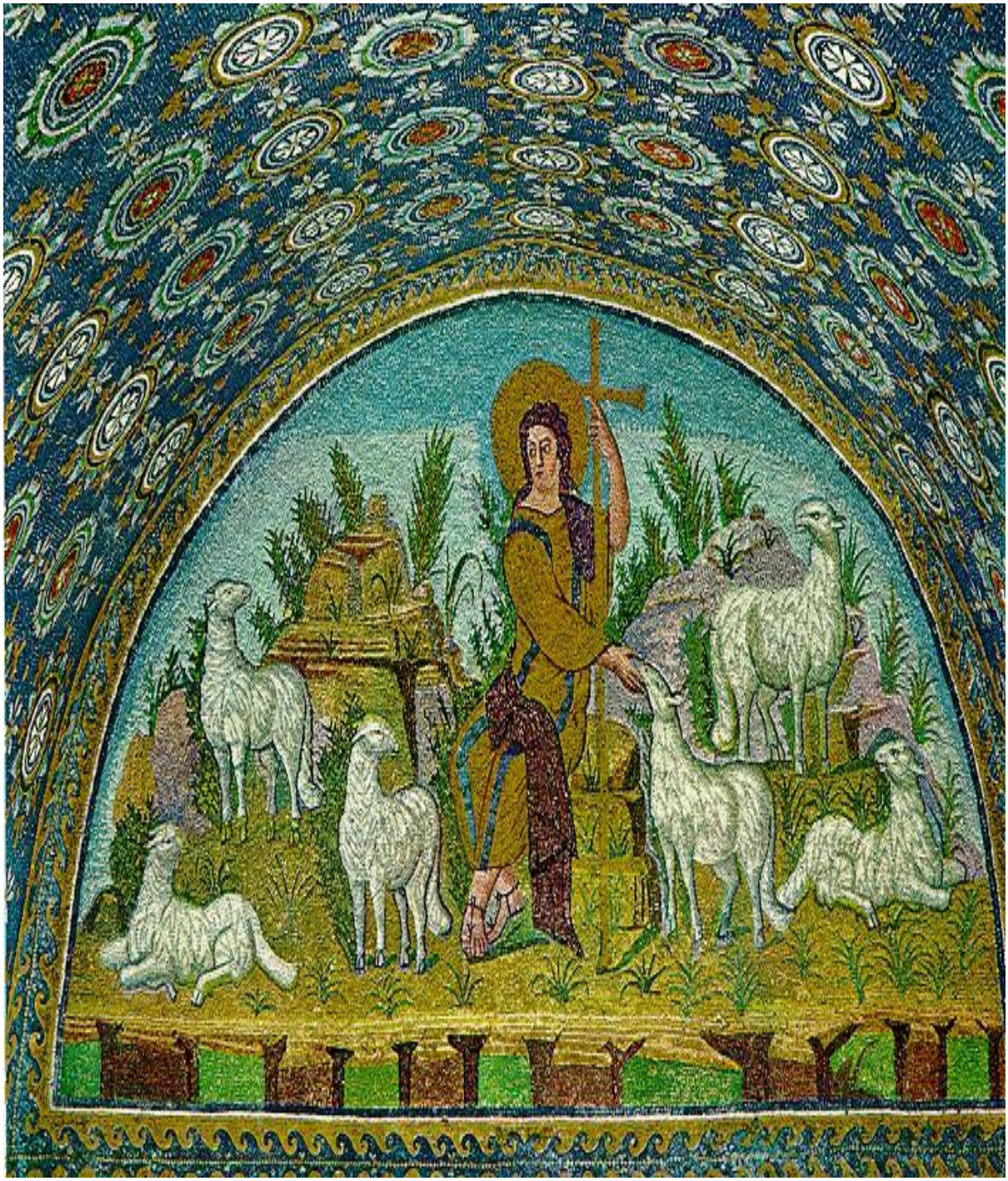

Fig. 6 Middle of 5th century. **The Good Shepherd Mosaic of Galla Placidia**. Ravenna.

Fig.7a 691 A.D. **The Dome of the Rock**. Tile mosaics. Jerusalem.

Fig.7b

691 A.D. **Detail of The Dome of the Rock**. Tile mosaics. Jerusalem.

No figures appear, in accordance with the precepts of the Koran, and the designs are entirely derived from plant forms and vases (Anthony, 1968).

With the tenth and eleventh centuries, came the beginning of the second great period of mosaics, comparable to the work at Ravenna of the sixth and seventh centuries. Mosaic art was executed in a hieratic manner, with a rigid, formalised style designed to inspire reverence and meditation. This was the so-called Second Golden Age of Byzantine art. In a History of Mosaics, Anthony (1968:84) speaks of how the Byzantine style mosaics were particularly well suited to the various types of cruciform-domed or single-domed churches:

> The unification of the interior on a centralised plan culminating in the dome, gave each subject portrayed its own architectural enframement and permitted it to be subordinated, if necessary, to other subjects of greater significance. Thus the architecture and decoration are interrelated and complementary to each other.

The number of comparatively small and curving wall surfaces with constantly varied perspectives were therefore well suited to mosaic decoration, since they provided an ever-changing reflection of light which is the very essence of mosaic.

The Persians developed a mosaic tile, which from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries was used in some of the most beautiful polychrome mosaic decorations in existence. The technique consisted of cutting large tiles of solid colours into small shaped units, which were then assembled into rich and complex patterns. Remarkable examples are found in the mosque at Veramin of the early fourteenth century, the mosque of Chah-Sindeh at Samarkand (1392), and the mosque at Isfahan, especially the great portal of the Masjid-i-Shah (Fig.8) (Anthony, 1968).

This technique of cutting large tiles of solid colours into small shaped units is evident in the work of contemporary mosaicists. This technique is used in the majority of the mosaic artworks by du Rand and myself and in my art practice. Examples of these will be discussed in Chapters Three and Four of this research.

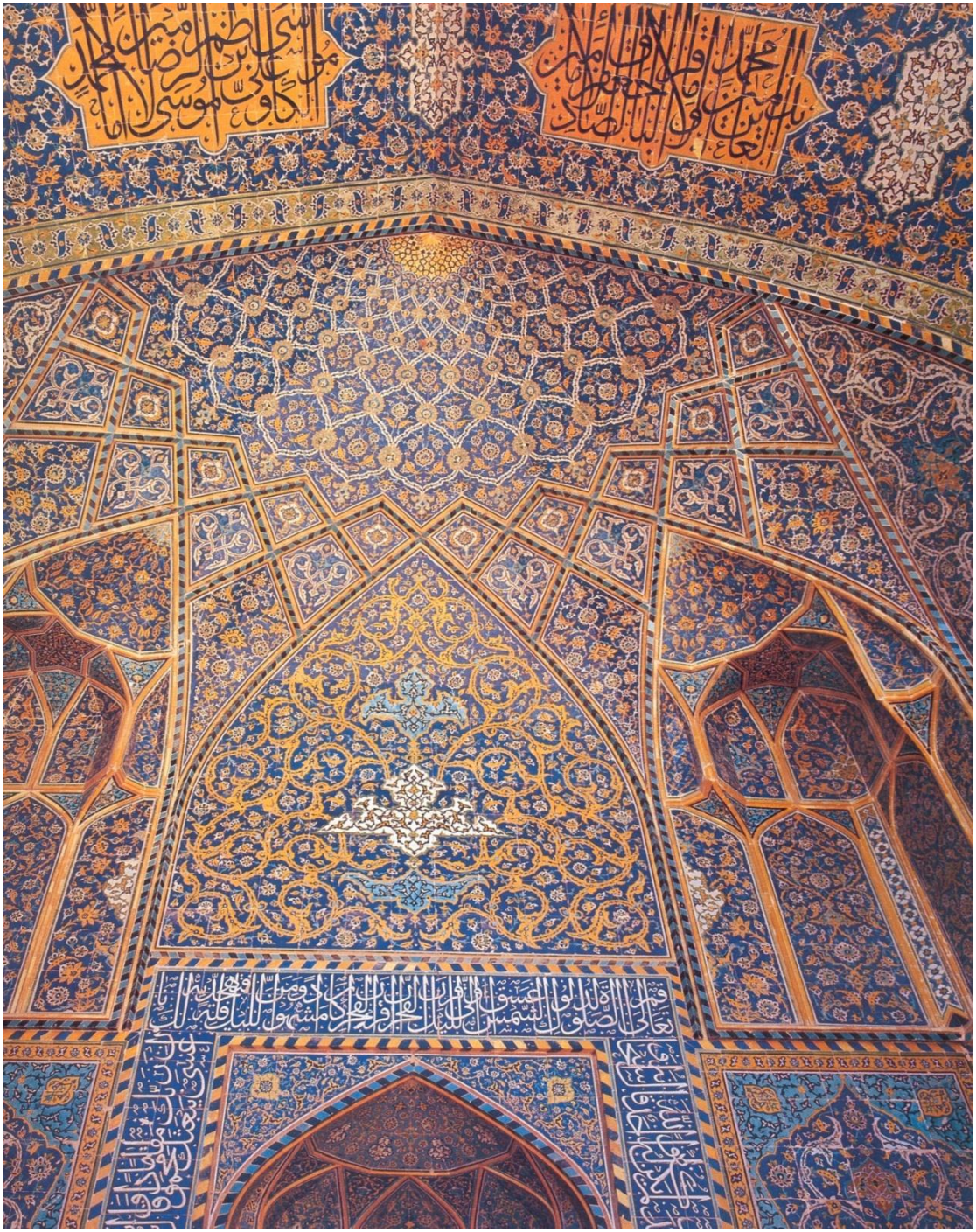

Fig. 8 1612-38. **Inner surface of dome at Masjid-i-Shah**. Tile mosaic and glazed-tile decoration. Isfahan, Iran.

During the mid to late nineteenth century in Murano, and later in Venice, the indirect or reverse technique of creating mosaic surfaces industrialised the method of production. Tesserae were cut and temporarily applied face down onto a strong backing paper. These works were then transported and installed on-site (Anthony, 1968).

This indirect technique of creating mosaic surfaces has been proven to be a faster method of production and was used in the completion of mosaic commissions by du Rand and myself. During installation, the sections of paper are pressed into the mortar-covered walls and gently tapped to insure a strong bond. When the mortar has hardened sufficiently, the paper is soaked with water and peeled away to reveal a perfectly flat, even mosaic surface. The sensitivity of the traditional, direct method, with its uneven surfaces created by setting each tile individually, is not possible using the indirect method.

At the end of the nineteenth century, with the advent of Art Nouveau, the Austrian painter, Gustav Klimt (1862-1918) and artist and architect Antonio Gaudi (1852-1926) took mosaics to even greater heights. Gaudi's interest in organic form was evident in his architecture. Many of his series of projects and buildings were inspired by the Arab/Moresque tradition of Andalucia. Gaudi made decorative use of coloured, glazed tiles on the facades of buildings (Fig.9a and Fig.9b). These tiles were made of a cheap and indigenous material.

Gaudi used tiles to add colour to his three dimensional features such as roof tops, ventilation shafts, undulating park benches and fountains (Goodwin, 2000). Unlike the internal mystery of a Byzantine church, fused with colour and light, Gaudi's work is external, bold and sculptural, where the mosaic becomes an architectural form. Like Gaudi, the mosaic art produced by artists today transcend the two-dimensionality of historical mosaic works and paved the way for tactility and innovation in materials.

The **Stoclet Frieze** (Figs. 10a and 10b) is one of a series of three mosaics created by Austrian painter Gustav Klimt for a 1905-1911 commission for the Palais Stoclet in Brussells, Europe.

Fig.9a Antonio Gaudi. 1904-1906. **Casa Batlló**. Glazed tile mosaic. Barcelona, Spain.

Fig.9b Antonio Gaudi. 1900 to 1914. **Mosaics at Park Guell**. Montana Pelada, Barcelona, Spain.

Fig.10a Gustav Klimt. 1905. **Stoclet Frieze**. Mosaic of marble, ceramic, gilded tiles, enamel, pearls and other semi-precious stones. Palais Stoclet in Brussells.

Fig.10b Gustav Klimt. 1905. **Detail of Stoclet Frieze**. Mosaic of marble, ceramic, gilded tiles enamel, pearls and other semi-precious stones. Palais Stoclet in Brussells.

The mosaic comprises of precious metal, semi-precious stones, enamel and coral against a background of marble. The panels depict swirling Trees of life, a standing female figure and an embracing couple. The graceful, sinuous patterns of curvy lines are characteristic of the Art Nouveau style (Rogoyska and Bade, 2005). The work of Durban artist Jane du Rand, discussed in Chapter Three, is influenced by Klimt's stylisation of form.

The 20th Century mosaic artist sourced a wide variety of materials including the discards of everyday living, broken ceramic-ware, wood, scrap metal, watch parts, nuts and bolts etc. More concerned with expressive quality, the contemporary artist is unperturbed if the work is called collage, construction or assemblage.

Untutored artists, the Naives, turned to the art of mosaic.

> During the 1930's in France, Raymond Isidore (1900-1964), a gravedigger from St Cheron on the outskirts of Chartres, collected discarded glass and porcelain to decorate his house (Fig.11). His obsession led him to encrust his whole environment with mosaic. His designs were directed by his dreams, encompassing images from his childhood as well as illustrations from magazines and newspapers. He was affectionately termed Picassiette (Goodwin, 2000:27).

The development of new mosaic materials, such as new adhesives, has influenced the expanding function of mosaic art. Epoxies have eliminated the need for the heavy mortars and grouts required to support in the old, traditional techniques. Improved building materials, particularly preformed panels such as asbestos sheets, provide a faster method of installation of large-scale mosaics.

Muralist, sculptor and potter Lilli Ann Killen Rosenberg utilises the medium of concrete in her large scale public works, believing that "It is the perfect medium for people of all ages to make clay pieces, collect objects and contribute their skills for a collaborative collage, resulting in a shared sense of ownership (Rosenberg in Locktov, 1998:118)." Rosenberg creates

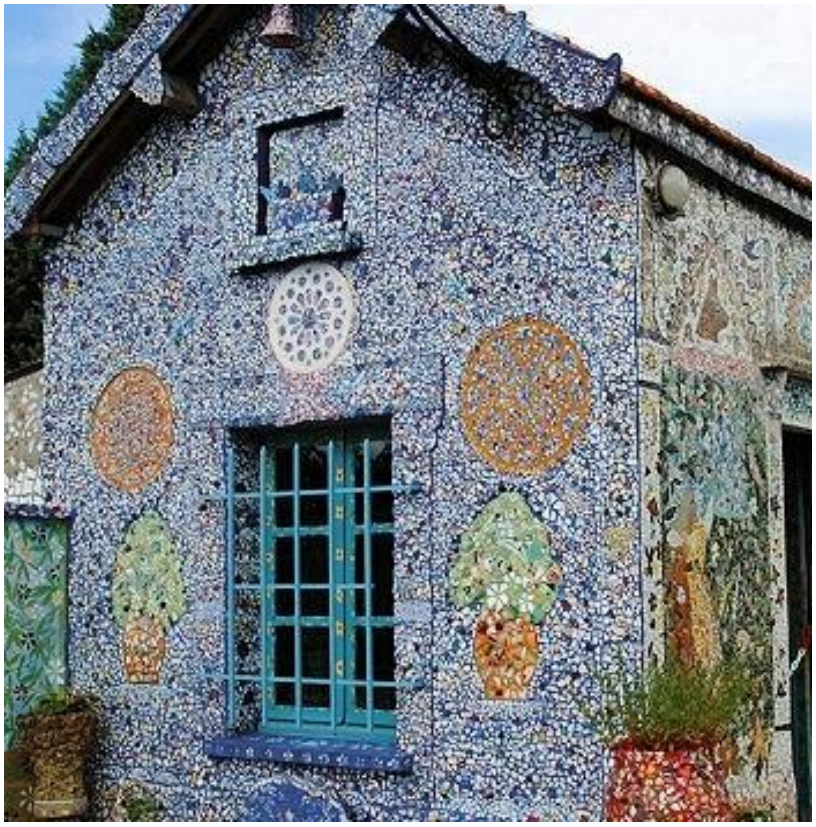

Fig.11 Raymond Isidore. 1930. **Mosaic house**. France.

pieces layered with both personal meaning and universal significance. Much of her work is related to children and children's themes.

Her largest commission to date is the MBTA's Park Street Station in Boston, **Celebration of the Underground** (Figs. 12a and 12b). Commemorating the opening of the first American subway in 1897, the mural is a sprawling, graphic narrative, the result of interviews conducted with historians, geologists, motormen and mechanics (Locktov, 1998:118).

It is important to understand how the use of mosaics in the past has influenced the working methods of contemporary artists. With the advance in technology today, the methods of creating mosaic surfaces, as well as the materials used for installation, have been revolutionised in order to create efficiency. Twentieth century subject matter has changed from religious to contemporary narrative. It is interesting to note that the indirect method of mosaic production that is used in contemporary art practice is similar to that first used during the mid to late nineteenth century in Murano. The contemporary use of mosaics as an aesthetic architectural element provides evidence of the importance of its role as an intergrated element, contributing to the visual quality of the architecture.

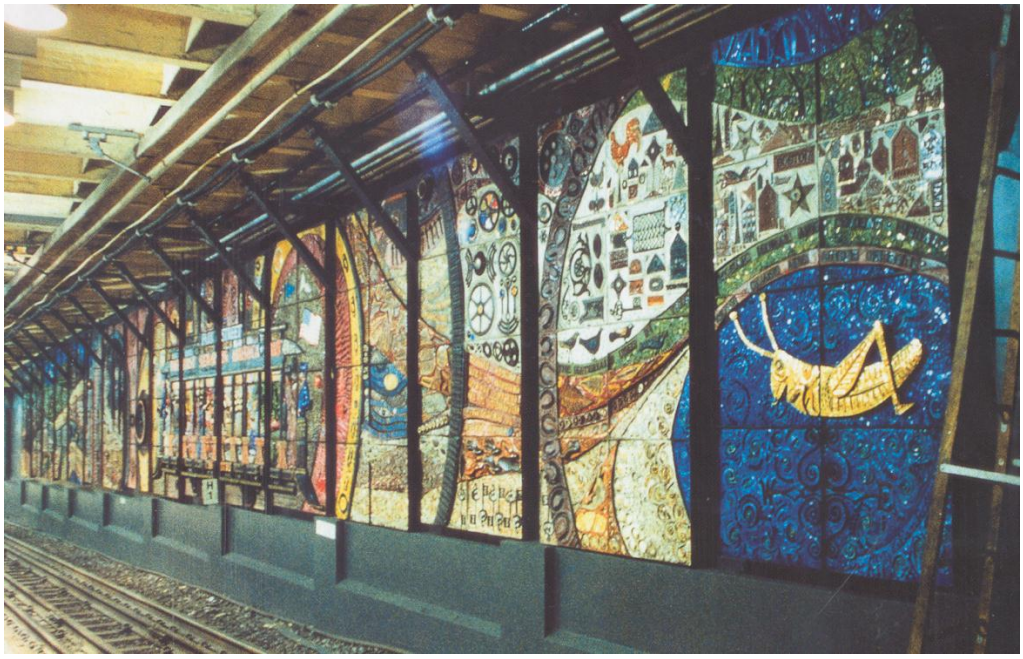

Fig. 12a Lilli Ann Killen Rosenberg. n.d. **Celebration of the Underground**. 3m x 33.5m. Ceramic, glass, metal and mixed media. MBTA Park Street Station, Boston, Massachusetts.

Fig. 12b Lilli Ann Killen Rosenberg. n.d. **Detail of Celebration of the Underground**.3m x 33.5m. Ceramic, glass, metal and mixed media. MBTA Park Street Station, Boston Massachusetts.

1.2 Tiles

The use of tiles as architectural fixtures and for the embellishment of interior walls, floors and ceilings is an ancient tradition, whose roots can be traced back to several different parts of the Middle East and across Europe.

The term tile in its widest sense can refer to any sort of material, including stone, vinyl and carpet. The tile referred to in this research is one that is made from clay and fired to a temperature at which the clay undergoes chemical changes and becomes permanently hard.

> As early as the fourth millennium BC the Egyptians were producing tiles of a siliceous, sandy composition. Even more impressive are the coloured and glazed tiles and bricks used by the Assyrians and Babylonians in Mesopotamia between the thirteenth and the fifth centuries BC. The Processional Way, which ran north/south up to the forecourt and the northern main gate of the city of Babylon, was constructed around 580 BC (Herbert and Huggins, 1995:11).

The Processional Way (Fig.13) consisted of two parallel walls 20-24 metres apart, with a 180-metre stretch decorated with a frieze of 60 lions in relief, each about two metres long consisting of moulded bricks, fired and glazed in bright colours. The lions were symbols of the goddess Ishtar, ruler of the sky, goddess of love and patroness of the army (Herbert and Huggins, 1995:11). “Culminating the great frieze of lions was the Ishtar Gate, its archway flanked by two towers. The exterior was clad with blue glazed bricks which displayed an estimated 575 relief depictions of two animals (Herbert and Huggins, 1995:13)”.

The Ishtar Gate of the city of Babylon (Fig.14), and the Processional Way leading up to the gate, is a powerful display of the use of architectural ceramics. “The architectural ceramics were conceived to demonstrate the power and greatness of Babylon” (ibid). Thus at a very early date glazed ceramics contributed in an important way to architectural image-building.

Whether used in broken pieces as tesserae, or in its entirety, the use of tile forms a distinctive link with the art of mosaic, known as tile mosaic. Tile mosaic is evident in ceramic decoration characteristic of the architecture of the Near East.

Fig.13 580 BC. **Detail of The Processional Way**. Glazed relief tiles. Babylon.

Fig.14 580 BC. **The Ishtar Gate of the city of Babylon**. Glazed relief tiles.

According to Lang (2004:33) “The hot climate of the Islamic region made the characteristically cool ceramic tile a convenient form of embellishment”. The earliest examples of Islamic wall tiles have been found at the ninth century palace of the Abbasids at Samarra on the banks of the Tigris near Baghdad (Herbert and Huggins, 1995:15).

Tiles, and tile mosaic, played an important role in the decoration of Islamic mosques, producing a variety of designs. They were grouped around the *mihrab* or prayer niche, as in the Karaouyine Mosque (Fig.15), or sometimes covered the inner surface of a dome or portal completely, as in the Shah Mosque at Isfahan (Fig.8). Tiles were made in several shapes, often linked together to form a composition. Decorations included swirling arabesques, scrolling plants, dots, palmettes, flowers, leaves, birds, animals, and inscriptions from the Koran (Fig.16) (Riley, 1987:23).

The production of underglaze painted tiles was associated with the town of Iznik in Turkey, the first of which were blue and white hexagonal tiles produced in the early years of the sixteenth century. These included flowers and saw-edged leaves, tree blossoms, cypresses, vines, tulips, carnations etc. (Fig.17a & Fig.17b) (Herbert and Huggins, 1995).

Until the nineteenth century in Europe tile-making was viewed as a form of craft; however in certain places it was an important part of the economy. According to Herbert and Huggins (1995:125),

> The British Industrial Revolution introduced new techniques for the preparation of tiles, using such improvements as steam power and iron presses. Industrialisation brought changes to towns and cities, where the demand for robust and decorative building materials increased, with the expansion of European cities. Railway stations, office buildings, hospitals, large hotels and municipal buildings such as town halls and libraries developed.

In *Decorative Tiles Throughout the Ages* Hans van Lemmen (1987:84) observed that

> The prosperity of the Dutch middle class led to expanding towns where many new houses were built. There was money which could be spent on such luxuries as tiles, which made homes more hygienic and added colour and decoration to the interior.

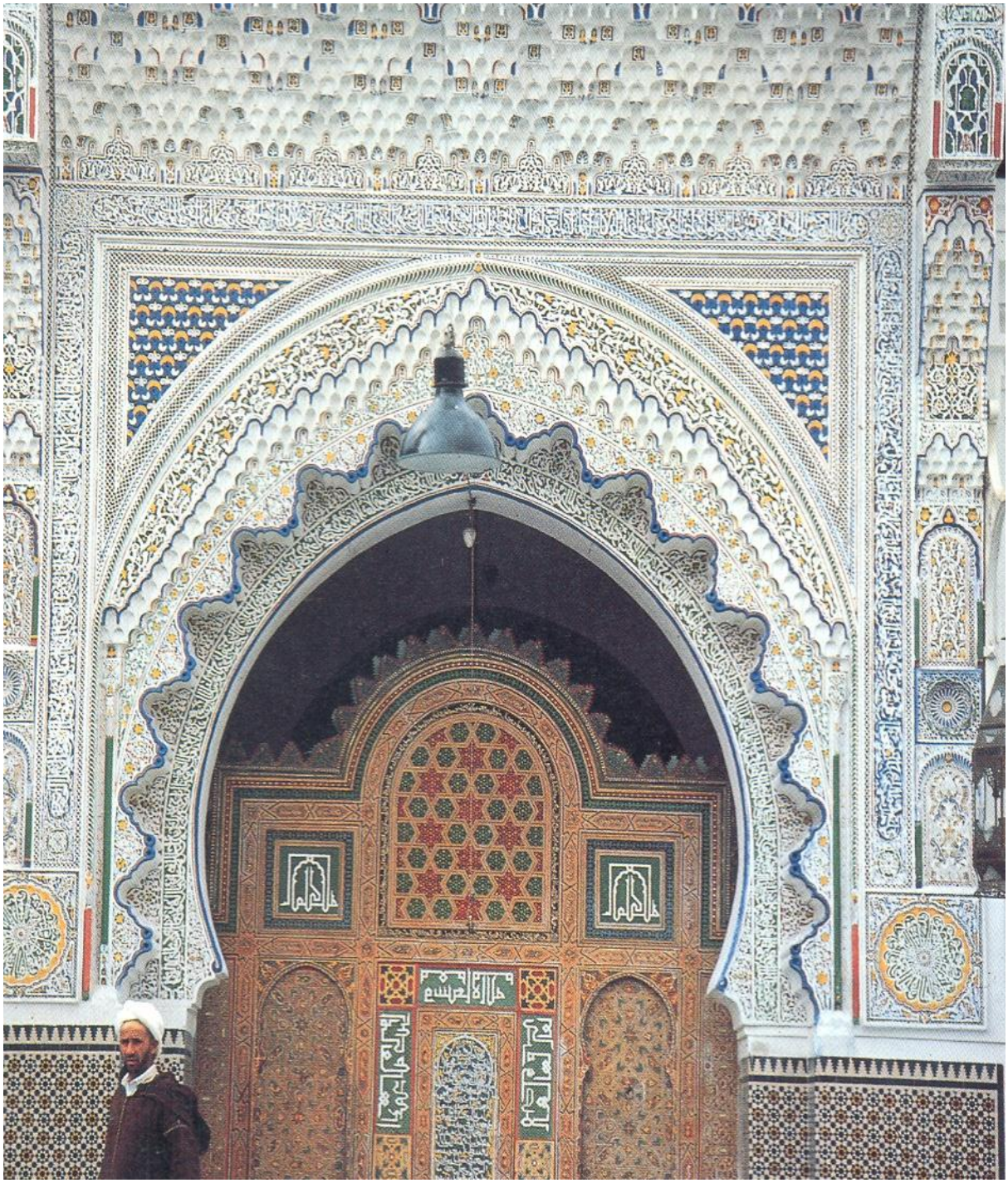

Fig.15 860 BC**. Karaouyine Mosque**. Ceramic tiles. Morocco.

Fig.16 **Examples of Islamic tile decoration**.

Fig.17a 16th Century. **Ceramic Iznik tile**.

Fig.17b 16th century.**Ceramic Iznik polychrome tile**.

There was a striking similarity in the use of wall tiles in many European countries in the mid-nineteenth century. Wall tiles were used to line kitchens, dairies and cellars where they conveniently kept out the damp. In living rooms these tiles were frequently used to decorate the big fireplaces and overmantels, to fill the spaces between windows and doors, or to form a narrow skirting. On the walls of staircases they provided a light-reflecting surface which was cleaner and more durable than whitewash. They were also used as a fireproof lining for ceilings and vaultings (Herbert and Higgins, 2995;20-26). This provided an opportunity for architects to extend the use of ceramic tiles in using their colourful, decorative qualities and their hard-wearing, easily cleaned surfaces as an advantage.

The Royal Dairy at Frogmore, (Fig.18) at Windsor is a remarkable example of a cool, clean and hygienic environment constructed during the nineteenth century.

> The highly decorated walls and floor tiles were not just decorative but functional as well, with their Victorian slip-resistant surface for an environment which was often wet underfoot. The superiority of tiles over flaking whitewashed walls gave them more than aesthetic appeal to a generation that was facinated by the relationship between art and science. Tiles on the ceiling helped with ventilation. The square recessed panels were pierced ceramic tiles that helped extract the warm air which rose to the ceiling (Herbert and Huggins, 1995:96).

Another opportunity for the architectural use of tile arrived with the steam locomotive. “For its associated buildings, the glazed surfaces of ceramic tiles offered an immediate advantage over stone, since stone became grimy” (Herbert and Huggins, 1995:108).

The railway station as a building type spread around the world and with it the use of robust and decorative tiles, helping to make rail travel a memorable experience and to promote the visual image of their railway company clients (Herbert and Huggins, 1995:108).

The architectural use of tiles is still favoured by architects today and local examples by James Hall and Andrew Walford will be discussed in Chapter Three.

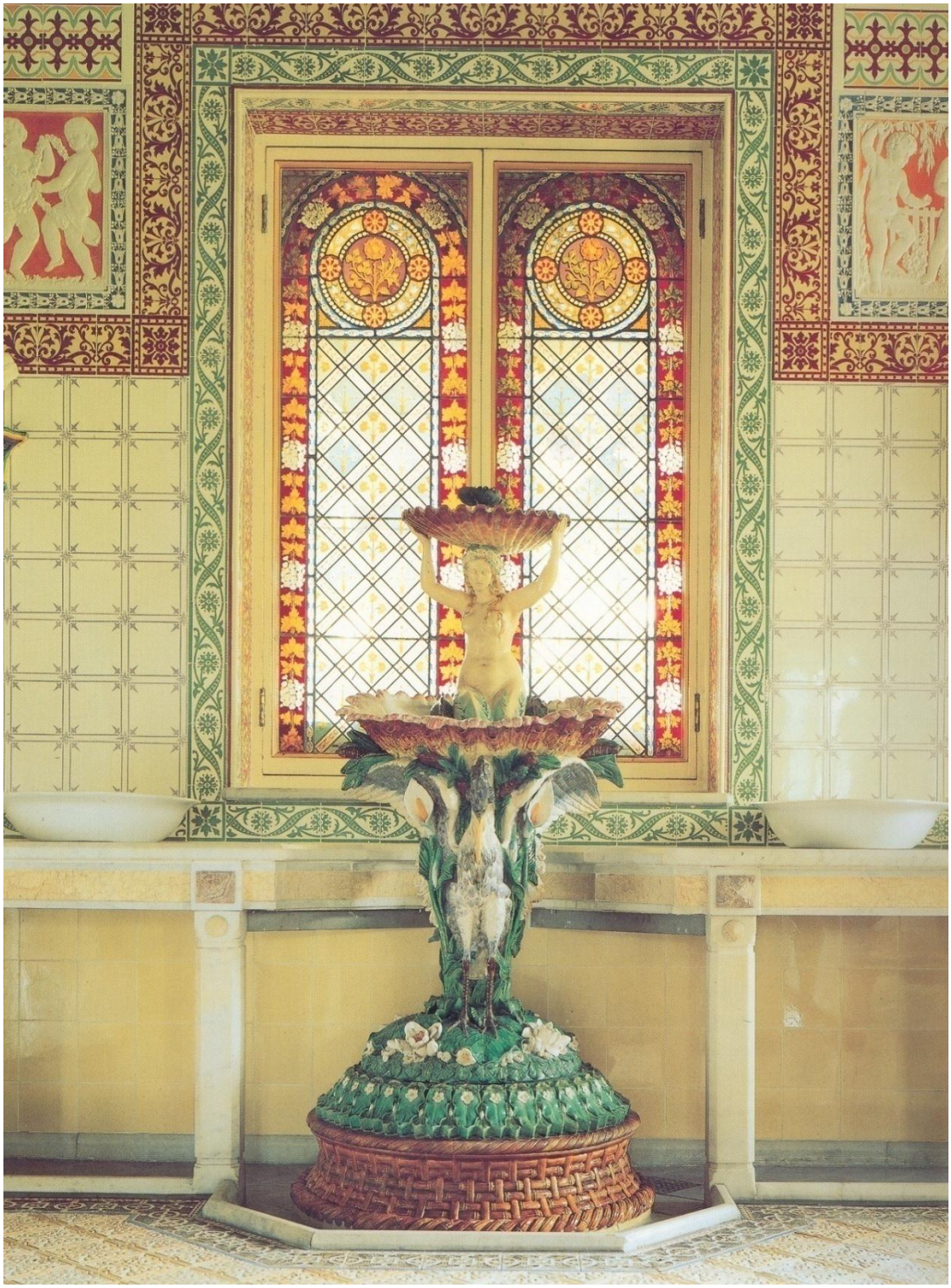

Fig.18 19th century. **The Royal Dairy at Frogmore**. Glazed tiles. Windsor.

Tile output in the latter half of the nineteenth century drew inspiration from history, embracing the ancient styles of Byzantium, the Italian Renaissance, the Romanesque and the Gothic. This was followed by the Aesthetic movement, a concoction of Japanese, Chinese, Persian, Turkish and Indian decorative styles (Fig. 19). Emerging from these fashions grew two other distinct styles – Art Nouveau and the Arts and Crafts Movement (Fig. 20) (Lang, 2004:26).

Emerging from Art Nouveau, the decorative arts reflected a desire to move away from the historical themes of the past and adopt the geometry of the modern machine age. This era favoured clean lines, rejecting the details and the intricacies of Edwardian and Victorian ornament. The age of highly ornate tiles was over.

In mass-produced housing, easy to clean tiles were used. Patterns included geometric arrangements of concentric circles, parallel lines, or diagonals asymmetrically laid out, checker patterns, and stylized, floral motifs (Lang, 2004).

Situated in the town of Poole, Dorset, England is Poole Pottery[1], founded in 1873 by Jesse Carter. In the early days the company produced mostly floor and wall tiles and architectural ceramics for the burgeoning interior design market. In 1921, John Adams, a distinguished ceramic designer and potter, along with Harold and Phoebe Stabler were asked to join Poole Potteries, which then became Carter, Stabler and Adams Ltd (Perfect Pieces, 2012).

Whilst Harold Stabler's skill was primarily centered on metal work, jewellery, sculptural representation, and cloisonné work, he was also a gifted modeller of figures and of Della Robbia plaques. Phoebe Stabler was already a noted ceramic figure modeller when she married Harold Stabler.

1. Poole Pottery was well known for its fine antique vases, urns, dinnerware, and other collectible china (Bell, 2010).

Fig. 19 c1895. **Tile design influenced by the Aesthetic Movement**. T & R Boote transfer printed dust-pressed tile, floral design, 6" sq.

Fig. 20 William de Morgan. c1872. **Arts and crafts hare tile.**

Their pooled skills meant that they became one of the most prominent and important design partnerships of the early and mid-twentieth century. Together they designed a series of war memorials, of which the Cenotaph in Durban is the largest (Levens History Group, 2009). The Cenatoph will be discussed further in Chapter Two.

Luca Della Robbia was a 15th Century sculptor from Florence who developed a glaze which made decorative faience[2] sufficiently robust and weather-resistant for outside display. The style has become synonymous with the work of Harold and Phoebe Stabler. One of the first works undertaken was a memorial fireplace commissioned for Rugby School in 1922 (Fig.21a). The figure of St George is approximately 3 feet 6 inches high and was modelled by Harold Stabler. The figures on either side of the fireplace were modelled by Phoebe Stabler (Fig.21b). There is a resemblance in terms of colour and the modeling of the clay to that of the Cenotaph in Durban.

It is important to note that Harold and Phoebe Stabler and John Adams played a vital and prominent role in the spread of the practice of ceramics in Durban. This will be discussed in Chapter Two.

In conclusion, it can be noted that the historical beginnings of the use of tiles as aesthetic elements in architecture adapted to changing architectural demands and styles. Like mosaics, the methods of tile production have been revolutionised in different times. Architects and artists today continue to use glazed tiles as a medium of architectural adornment. The content of contemporary tile murals continues to take into account the architectural role of the building. The next chapter will highlight how John Adams and Harold and Phoebe Stabler of Carter, Stabler and Adams influenced and paved the way for the use of architectural ceramics in Durban.

2. *Faience* refers to earthenware covered with a tin glaze, used to describe those wares made in France, Germany and Scandinavia (Manners, 1990:102).

Fig. 21a Harold and Phoebe Stabler. 1922. **Memorial fireplace.** Rugby School.

Fig. 21b Harold and Phoebe Stabler. 1922. **Detail of memorial fireplace.** Rugby School.

CHAPTER TWO: THE HISTORICAL USE OF CERAMICS AS AN AESTHETIC ELEMENT IN DURBAN ARCHITECTURE (1914-1929).

This chapter includes a discussion of selected examples of the use of tiles and mosaics as aesthetic architectural elements in Durban from 1914-1929. The three examples selected for discussion are: **The 'Gate' Retiring Rooms** (1914) on Point Road that houses a polychromatic tile mural in an Art Nouveau style (Bennett, Adams and Brusse, 1987:52); the colourful ceramic façade (1921) on **St. Mary's Anglican Church** that serves as a memorial to those who lost their lives during World War One; **The Cenotaph** (1926) on Gardiner Street that contains two angels and a white figure in loin cloth, symbolizing the departure of the warrior's spirit to a heavenly abode, represented by a white dove and a few stars.

The history of ceramics in Durban is closely associated with John Adams, a distinguished ceramic designer and potter. Adams came to South Africa from England in 1915, to take the position as head of the Durban Art School, at the Durban Technical College (now known as the Durban University of Technology). Immediately on arrival, he commenced to experiment with local clays and glazes, and was responsible for the first coal-fired kiln built in Lancers Road in 1916 (Adams, December 1941).

The founding of the Ceramic Studio at Olifantsfontein, by John Adams's pupils of The Durban School of Art, greatly enhanced the possibility of using ceramics as an aesthetic element on buildings in South Africa. These students were Miss Short, Miss Johnstone, Miss Methley and Miss Frank who studied further in England, specialising in pottery. Their work consisted mainly of decorative tiles and modelled faience, examples of which can be seen at the Childrens' Hospital, Addington, Durban (Hillebrand, 1991:4).

In many ways, as will be revealed below, although the use of ceramics as an aesthetic element in Durban architecture reflects a distinctive local identity with reference to the city's history and maritime background, there is a strong European influence evident in most examples discussed. This is particularly evident in terms of the style of the ceramic works. This is not surprising, considering that the architects and artists involved in the design of the works were trained in Europe.

2.1 The 'Gate' Retiring Rooms (1914)

One of the earliest examples of the use of ceramics as an aesthetic architectural element is that of the **'Gate' Retiring Rooms** on Mahathma Gandhi Road (Point Road) (Fig. 22) built in 1914. This Edwardian public toilet and bus-shelter with its domes and plaster ornamentation is a fine example of Durban's Municipal Baroque architecture (Bennet, Adams and Brusse, 1987:32).

On the recessed facade of this building is a polychromatic tile mural in an Art Nouveau style[3] (Fig. 23) by an unknown artist. The mural depicts a sailing scene of yachts and fishing trawlers framed by Neptune with his trident rising from the Indian Ocean (Bennet, Adams and Brusse, 1987:32).
The border consists of Art Nouveau decorative patterns in the form of symmetrically curved, undulating lines, known as whiplash lines, and organic plant like forms (Fig. 24 and Fig. 25).These forms are sinuous, rhythmical and dream like.

The image, which comprises of 208 glazed tiles, is reminiscent of early colonial maritime painting and is rendered in a naturalistic style. The artist has used the tube line technique[4]. The raised lines of the pattern give the tile a three dimensional appearance that adds tactility to the image, thus inviting the viewer to engage physically with the tiles.

3. Art Nouveau is an international movement and style of art, architecture and applied art; especially the decorative arts, that peaked in popularity at the turn of the twentieth century (1890-1905) (Art Nouveau, 2012).

4. Tube lining is when slip or liquid clay is trailed onto the surface of the tile to make raised lines separating the areas where different colour is wanted. Coloured glazes were then applied. This technique was used for Art Nouveau tiles (Tile Heaven, 2000).

Fig. 22 Artist unknown. 1914. **The 'Gate' Retiring Rooms**. Mahatma Gandhi Road (Point Road), Durban.

Fig. 23 Artist unknown. 1914. **The 'Gate' Retiring Rooms**. Polychromatic tile mural. Mahatma Gandhi Road (Point Road), Durban.

Fig. 24 Artist unknown. 1914. **Detail of The 'Gate' Retiring Rooms**. Polychromatic tile mural. Mahatma Gandhi Road (Point Road), Durban.

Fig. 25 Artist unknown. 1914. **Detail of The 'Gate' Retiring Rooms**. Polychromatic tile mural. Mahatma Gandhi Road (Point Road), Durban.

The central image is composed as if the artist were looking through a window onto a scene of ocean with yachts. The tile mural undoubtedly adds charm and sophistication to a building that might otherwise be unnoticed.

2.2 World War One Memorial, St. Mary's Anglican Church (1921)

The colourful ceramic panel on the base of the bell tower of **St. Mary's Anglican Church** in Greyville, Lilian Ngoyi (Windermere) Road, Durban (Fig. 26) is a memorial to those who lost their lives in World War 1. The ceramic panels (Fig. 27 and Fig. 28) were executed by John Adams in 1921. John Adams was head of the Durban Art School from 1918 to 1921 (Hillebrand, 1991:6). According to Hillebrand, this memorial was probably the first Della Robbia[5] work produced in South Africa and was designed in collaboration with A.R Martin and O.J.P. Oxley, both lecturers at the Durban School of Art (Hillebrand, 1991:6). According to Adams, decorative glazed material on this scale had up to then not been attempted before in South Africa (Adams, 1941:20).

The memorial was placed at the base of the tower and consists of the central figure of Christ in an arched niche (Fig. 27), framed by decorative maiolica[6] panels (Fig. 29). The dove, a symbol of the Holy Spirit sits at the top of the cross, with the letters I.N.R.I[7] below. The figure of Chist is surrounded by panels containing symbols. These include Jesus' crown of thorns, a ladder symbolising Jacob's dream (Genesis 28:12) or a ladder that is reaching up into Heaven, a hammer, pincer, spear and nails symbolising martyrdom and the death of Jesus on the cross and a Latin cross representing the cross of Jesus' crucifixion (Christian Symbology, 2011).

5. Della Robbia is a style of ceramics which refers to the original Italian masterpieces of the Della Robbia brothers, Luca Della Robbia, Andrea Della Robbia and Giovanni Della Robbia (Andrea della Robbia, 2012).

6. Majolica or maiolica is an earthenware or faience of brownish-red body, decorated with heavily embossed, richly coloured, glossy, opaque glazes. The high reputation of maiolica as a ware of outstanding design and quality was gained in Renaissance Italy from the 15th to the 17th century (Schirmer, 2010).

7. I.N.R.I is a representation of the words written on the sign above the cross on which Jesus was crucified (John 19:19). The letters stand for the Latin phrase Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judaeorum meaning "Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews" (John 19:19) (Christian Symbology, 2011).

Fig. 26 **St. Mary's Anglican Church**. Greyville, Lilian Ngoyi (Windermere) Road, Durban.

Fig. 27 John Adams. 1921. **Figure of Christ in an arched niche**. 2m x 1m. Ceramic tiles. World War One Memorial at St. Mary's Anglican Church, Durban.

Fig. 28 John Adams and O.J.P. Oxley. 1921. **Names of the fallen**. Ceramic tiles. St. Mary's Anglican Church, Durban.

Fig. 29 John Adams. 1921. **Detail of Maiolica panel**. St. Mary's Anglican Church, Durban.

Below the symbols is the question 'IS IT NOTHING TO YOU ALL YE THAT PASS BY?' On either side are the names of the fallen, displayed in twelve arched niches; each niche consists of five panels (Fig. 28). The top panels contain a decorative maiolica design. The names of the fallen were written by O.J.P. Oxley in blue oxide (Hillebrand, 1986:214-215).

According to Adams, he had to overcome many problems in the creation of the artwork. Achieving exact shrinkage of the fired pieces, so that they could fit the spaces exactly and outsourcing the appropriate clay were two of their major hurdles (Adams, 1941:20). Despite these problems, the design, along with the layout of the tile panels are successfully integrated with the architecture of the Church.

Returning to England in 1921, Adams was persuaded to join Poole's Potteries to form a company known as Carter, Stabler and Adams. It was here that Adams became involved with the making of the Durban war memorial, **The Cenotaph** (Armstrong, 2008).

2.3 The Cenotaph (1926)

Francis Farewell Square is a garden, walled in stone, lying in the heart of Durban city (Fig. 24). It was here that the first English settlers camped and many of the most significant settler events and people of the city are commemorated (Bennet, Adams and Brusse, 1987:33). The square is at the intersection of Anton Lembede (Smith Street), Dorothy Nyembe (Gardiner Street) and Dr Pixley Kaseme Streets (West Street).

The **Cenotaph** (Fig. 30 and Fig. 31) in Francis Farewell Square is one of Durban's few remaining examples of the Art Deco style and incorporates memorials to the fallen of both World Wars. The monument, an eleven metre (thirty six feet) obelisk, is made of granite with ceramic relief panels, comprising two angels carrying the spirit of a fallen warrior to a heavenly abode, represented by a yellow sunburst, a white dove and a starry sky comprising nineteen stars (Durban Cenotaph, 2010).
The design of this decorated monument was the result of a competition in 1921, won by the Cape Town architectural firm of Eagle, Pilkington and McQueen. It was designed by H.L.Gordon Pilkington,

an architect and artist working with Herbert Baker (Thompson, 2008). Pilkington was born in Cape Town and went to Europe for further experience on completion of his articles (Artefacts.co.za, 2011). Baker completed his training as an architect in England, where he worked. He later came to South Africa (South Arican History Online, 2010).

The ceramics were made by Harold and Phoebe Stabler, together with John Adams, in England. The stone sections of the monument are aesthetically designed in a neoclassical style; pillars supporting electric torches and granite urns surround the main structure. As with other Commonwealth cenotaphs a wreath crowns the top; in this case it is a wreath of laurel made of green glazed ceramic, symbolizing victory (Fig. 33) (Christian Symbology, 2011). The statement 'Tell it to the generation following' appears below. A bronze statue of a dead soldier lies stretched out on a plinth in front of the monument (Durban Cenotaph, 2010). The neoclassical and Art Deco elements are harmoniously integrated to create a lavishly decorated monument.

The colourfulness of this monument, influenced by King Tutunkhamen's treasure, outraged the Durban public (Durban Cenotaph, 2010). The public concept of a war memorial was very conservative, with expectations of an undecorated monolith. However, the vivid colour of the figurative decoration makes the cenotaph possibly one of the most unique memorials of its kind. Time has, however, mellowed the colours.

The **Cenotaph** was unveiled on 7 March 1926 (Hillebrand, 1986:215). The design and creation of the ceramic pieces on the Cenotaph show a distinct European influence, in no small way due to the architects' and designers' link to Europe.

Fig. 30 John Adams. 1920. **The Cenotaph**. Eleven metre obelisk. Granite with ceramic relief panels. Francis Farewell Square, Durban.

Fig. 31 John Adams. 1920. **Detail of the Cenotaph.** Ceramic relief panels. Francis Farewell Square, Durban.

Fig. 32 John Adams. 1920. **Detail of the Cenotaph.** Ceramic relief panels. Francis Farewell Square, Durban.

Fig. 33 John Adams. 1920. **Detail of the back and side of the Cenotaph.** Relief ceramic panels. Francis Farewell Square, Durban.

2.4 The Ceramic Studio (1925)

The Ceramic Studio at Olifantsfontein was founded in 1925 by Gladys Short and Marjorie Johnstone, two former students of the Durban School of Art; trained by John Adams. They were later joined by Natal artists Joan Methley and Audrey Frank. These were the women who attracted to the Transvaal a succession of fellow artists, potters and painters between 1926 and 1955 (Hillebrand, 1991:4).

The Ceramic Studio flourished at a time when the South African public only supported industrial china from overseas. Spanish architectural styles based on the Alhambra were fashionable during the 1920's and 1930's, opening the way for important commissions for architectural *faience* and decorative tiles (Hillebrand, 1991:4). The Ceramic Studio produced the tiles and modelled faience for various Durban buildings, the most notable being Ritchie McKinlay's Quadrant House (1927) (Fig. 34) (Hillebrand, 1991:6).

The government architect, J.S. Cleland, offered the ceramic studio its first big project; the decoration of the new Addington Children's Hospital in Durban. The project was done in collaboration with the sculptor Mary Stainbank, who designed the bas-reliefs and fountains (Figs. 35,36,37,38, and 39). Unfortunately, due to neglect, a number of the pieces have been damaged. This was followed by numerous pictorial tile panels for Post Offices, Police Stations and Government Offices throughout South Africa (Hillebrand, 1991:4).

In conclusion it can be noted that, although the use of ceramics as an aesthetic element in Durban architecture reflects a distinctive local identity with reference to the city's settler history and maritime background, there is a strong European influence present in terms of the neo-classical and Art Deco design elements used. This was as a result of European training of the artists and designers involved in the creation of the ceramics as an aesthetic element in Durban architecture. This was a trend that was to continue well into the twentieth century. The next chapter investigates the use of ceramics as an aesthetic element in Durban architecture in the works of James Hall, Andrew Walford and Jane du Rand.

Fig. 34 The Ceramic Studio. 1927. Tiles and modelled faience. **Quadrant House**.114-115 Margaret Mncadi Avenue (Victoria Embankment).

Fig. 35 Mary Stainbank. 1929. **Proposed design of glazed fountain in tiled niche**. Addington Children's Hospital, Durban.

Fig. 36 Mary Stainbank. 1929. **Glazed fountain in tiled niche**. Addington Children's Hospital, Durban.

Fig. 37 Mary Stainbank. 1929. **Sister Water**. Glazed fountain in tiled niche, Addington Children's Hospital, Durban.

Fig. 38 Mary Stainbank. 1929. **Christ Blessing the Children**. Della-Robbia panel. Main entrance, Addington Children's Hospital, Durban.

Fig. 39 Mary Stainbank. 1929. **Detail of Christ Blessing the Children**. Della-Robbia panel. Main entrance, Addington Children's Hospital, Durban.

CHAPTER THREE: THE USE OF CERAMICS AS AN AESTHETIC ELEMENT IN DURBAN ARCHITECTURE BY JAMES HALL, ANDREW WALFORD AND JANE DU RAND

3.1 James Oliver Hall (1916-2006)

This chapter will investigate and evaluate the use of ceramics as an aesthetic element in Durban architecture in the works of James Hall, Andrew Walford and Jane du Rand will be investigated. These artists have been selected as their work represents a wide range of the use of ceramics as an aesthetic element in Durban architecture, over a specific period of time (1914 - 2012).

James Oliver Hall, sculptor and ceramicist, was born on 30 September 1916 in Ettrick, a small village on the South Island of New Zealand. He studied in London at the Slade School of Fine Art majoring in sculpture and architecture from 1946-49 under Randolph Schwabe and F.E. McWilliam, and the Camberwell school of Art under Jacob Drew and R. Kendall, where he studied ceramics and later taught. Hall held a Diploma in Fine Art (An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand, 1966).

In 1956 Hall was appointed as head of the Department of Ceramics and Sculpture at the Natal Technical College Art School (now the Department of Fine Art and Jewellery Design at the Durban University of Technology). From the 1960's to the 1990's he was design consultant to the glazing division at Corobrik Natal, where he designed decorative tiles and formulated glazes. Here he also liaised with clients and designed customised tile panels for new buildings. The Corobrik glazing department made 14 stock patterns of sculptured tiles, of which the original two, the **Diamond Cut** (Fig. 40) and the **Triple Circle** (Fig. 41) developed by Hall, were the most popular (Meijer, 2007:19).

Between 1947 and 1956 he produced a number of artworks on urban facades in and around KwaZulu-Natal. These include tiles and lettering (Fig. 42, Fig. 43, Fig. 44 and Fig. 45), crests (Fig. 45 and Fig. 46), sculptures, doors, windows, and mural panels (Fig. 53), in a variety of

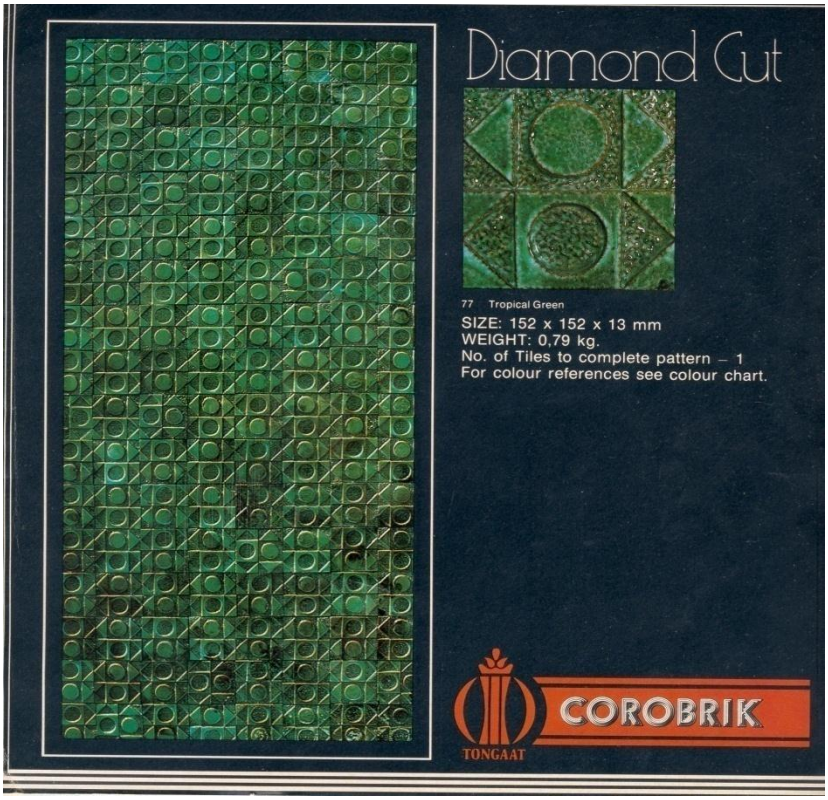

Fig. 40 James Hall. (n.d). **Diamond Cut**. Tropical Green. 152x152x13mm. Corobrik sculptured ceramic tile.

Fig. 41 James Hall. (n.d). **Triple Circle**. Antique Gold. 229x76x13mm. Corobrik sculptured ceramic tile.

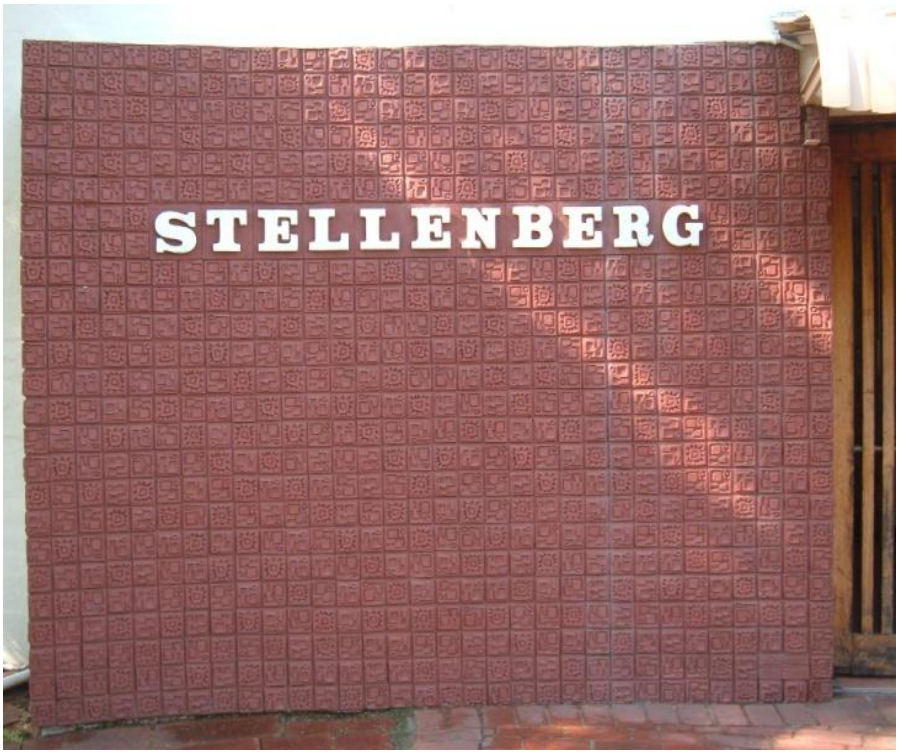

Fig. 42 James Hall. 1963. **Stellenberg**. Ceramic lettering and decorative panels for exterior wall in terracotta clay. 198 Musgrave Road, Durban.

Fig. 43 James Hall. 1963. **Stellenberg**. Detail of ceramic lettering and decorative panels for exterior wall in terracotta clay. 198 Musgrave Road, Durban.

mediums. The ceramic lettering and decorative panels at the entrance to the **Stellenberg** apartment block (Fig. 42) is a feature wall that immediately attracts the passer-by's attention with abstract details in rich terracotta clay. The tile panel on the façade of the **Blue Waters Hotel** (Fig. 44) on 175 Snell Parade is harmoniously intergrated into the architecture, with expansive columns covered in tiles creating a framework for the windows.

Hall also participated in numerous art exhibitions both locally and abroad (Meijer, 2007:19).
In a review of a retrospective exhibition of James Oliver Hall titled 'A Life's Work', at the Durban Art Gallery in 2007, Elizabeth Perrill (2007), stated that Hall's public works are part of a legacy that ties this province to a greater history of art and architecture. Hall's work is evident in the city, although it is not always acknowledged as being executed by him.

Among his most well-known works are the **Union Refectory Counters** at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College (1962) and the ceramic panel titled **Wisdom Through Growth** on the façade of the Durban North Primary School (Fig. 45) (1966). According to Perrill (2007) Hall's fascination with modernism came out of the Slade School of Art, London and his quick sketch of the abstraction was extremely pervasive during the 1950's and 1960's.

3.1.1 Union Refectory Counters (1962)

The ceramic panels at the University of KwaZulu-Natal's refectory counters have created an interest amongst staff and students alike, despite being obscured by rails and revolving stools (Schauffer,1962:1).

According to Schauffer (1962:1), the main image (Fig 47) on the counter wall facing the main stairway represented the spirit of the refectory, the meeting place of the students at the University. The tile panel depicts a male with facial hair and a female with pierced earlobes. The abandonment of perspective in favor of a flat, two-dimensional picture plane with angular facial expressions is reminiscent of the work of Spanish artist Pablo Picasso.

Fig. 44 James Hall. 1964. **Blue Waters Hotel**. Ceramic tile panel. 175 Snell Parade, Durban.

Fig. 45 James Hall. (n.d). **School Crest and lettering**, glazed ceramic relief, 20 Bideford Road, Bluff, Durban.

Fig. 46 James Hall. (n.d). **Natal Technical College crest.** 1.2mx850mm. Glazed ceramic tiles. Smith Street, Berea, Durban.

In addition to this are two panels of relief tiles and glazed brick. One is positioned on the side of the self-service counter and the other is positioned on the front of the milk-bar counter. The self-service counter panel contains seven relief-tile pieces and four glazed tiles. With the exception of two glazed tiles, all are treated semi-naturalistically (Fig. 48, 49, and 50) (Schauffer, 1962). The milk-bar panel has no glazed tiles; it consists of eleven relief tile pieces, all of which are abstract (Fig. 51 and 52).

Schauffer (1962:1) noted that the theme in both panels embodies the spirit and function of the refectory. Elements of food and eating define the predominant shapes and the mood of both panels. The semi-naturalistic tiles have recognisable subject matter. The images on the self-service counter (Fig. 48) consist of shapes suggesting an eye, a jagged tooth, a pointed fish tail, a leaf and the mouth of a fish. A large fish with cruel teeth is ravenously devouring a smaller fish. In Figure 49 birds eagerly search for food with fork-like, talon-like beaks. Having found the food the birds jockey for a better position and fight to get at it, one bird turning on another. Also notable are the vine and leaf borders of these tiles. The tile in Figure 50 depicts the different fruit and vegetables found at the refectory. Figures 47, 49 and 50 are rendered in a cubist manner, with a simplification of form.

The milk bar abstract panel (Figs.51 and 52), consists of organic shapes which have been further abstracted. Here, the limitations of naturalism are not present. The organic unity of mood and theme is vivified to an extent that is only possible in the abstract form. In Figure 51 the first tile from the left corresponds to the bird relief of the semi-naturalistic panel (Fig. 49). The eating bird shape is recognizable in the lower left hand corner. The image of the aggresive bird jostling for position is still recognizable and is very prominent in the design. The vine and leaf bordering, almost classical in its inspiration, has been abstracted into a tree shape in the upper left hand corner. Within the other tiles in the abstract panel other combinations are recognizable, some more readily than others. The contrast between the relief tiles and the glazed brick provide a strong visual interest.

Fig. 47 James Hall. 1962. **The Union Refectory Counters**. Ceramic tiles. University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College, Durban.

Fig. 48 James Hall. 1962. **The Union Refectory Counters**. Ceramic tiles. University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College, Durban.

The vine and leaf shapes have been completely transformed and are now combined with the jagged tooth and pointed beak elements. The abstract forms in the tile panels creates visual interest through the use of positive and negative shapes, contributing to the overall success of the piece. The sharp, aggressive shapes evident in these abstract tile panels recall the abstraction of natural forms in the paintings of British artist Graham Sutherland (1903-1980).

3.1.2 Wisdom through Growth (1966)

The ceramic panel created by Hall in 1966 for the facade of a classroom at the Durban North Primary School (**Wisdom through Growth**) (Fig. 53) was described by him as follows:

> This mural is based on 'Wisdom through Growth' with bird-life symbolising youth, adolescence and maturity, against backgrounds of three coloured panels representing (sic) passage of time. Dawn (grey), midday (blue), and night (dark blue).The guinea fowl with their baby chicks embody parental control. On the first branch of the 'tree of growth' are peacocks typifying strength and beauty of youthful beings, while above them is a young bird on the wing, about to seek adventure further afield. Opposite this group are two pigeons who have settled down to raising a family, while 'wisdom', in the form of the symbolic owl, is found on the tree top (Durban North Primary School pamphlet, 1966).

The tile panel, which consists of fifty eight glazed tiles, echoes the shape of the roof of the building and provides a visually appealing statement on a neutral face brick wall. Hall has used nature and natural forms to symbolise the family and the growth of a child. The natural forms engage children and are accessible to children at primary school level, where images and symbols of nature are often used to aid human communication. The simplification of form and emphasis on texture and pattern creates an aesthetically stimulating mural.

It is clear that Hall made a strong contribution to the use of ceramics as an aesthetic element in Durban architecture. Hall played a prominent role in raising the status of ceramics as an art form in Durban. His position as design consultant to the glazing division at Corobrik Natal from the 1960's to the 1990's provided him with a platform to showcase his talent and contribute extensively to ceramic art forms on interior and exterior surfaces of buildings. It also provided him with the opportunity to liaise with clients and produce artworks that visually enhance architectural interiors and exteriors.

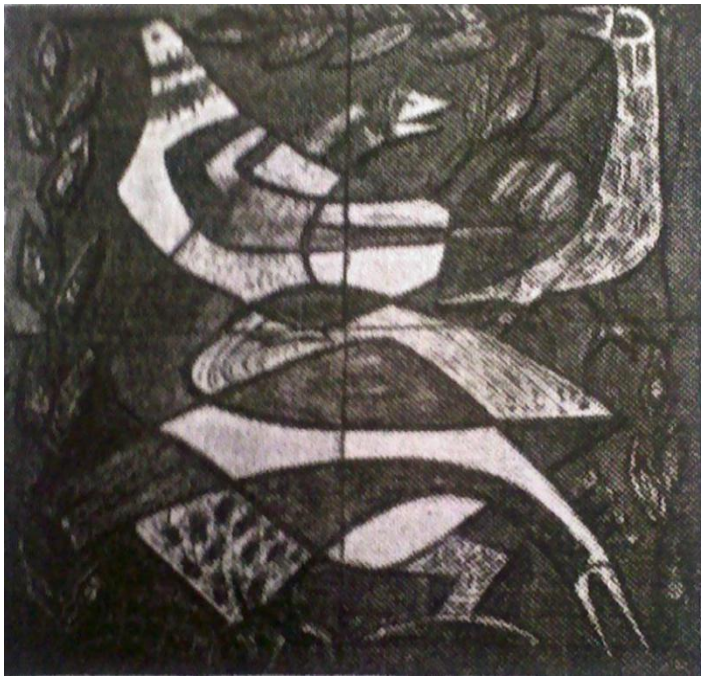

Fig. 49 James Hall. 1962. **The Union Refectory Counters**. Ceramic tiles. University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College, Durban.

Fig. 50 James Hall. 1962. **The Union Refectory Counters**. Ceramic tiles. University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College, Durban.

Fig. 51 James Hall.1962. **The Union Refectory Counters**. Ceramic tiles. University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College, Durban.

Fig. 52 James Hall. 1962. **The Union Refectory Counters**. Ceramic tiles. University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College, Durban.

Fig. 53 James Hall, 1966. **Wisdom through Growth**. Ceramic tile panel. Durban North Primary School, 22 Sunfield Place, Durban.

3.2 Andrew Walford (b. 1942)

Andrew Walford's interest in pottery began at the age of ten and has continued unabated since. Walford was born in Bournemouth, England on December 4, 1942. His mother, who was born and grew up in India and studied art in Paris at the age of sixteen, had a great influence in encouraging Walford's interest in art (Wright, 2009:28).

Walford suffered from dyslexia and experienced learning difficulties at school. He moved to South Africa with his parents in 1947 and later trained as a commercial artist at the Durban Art School (now known as the Durban University of Technology). After a six-month sculpture course, he started a pottery apprenticeship at the Walsh Marais Studio in Durban and continued his training with Sammy Liebermann (1920–84) in Johannesburg. In 1961 he took over the Walsh Marais Studio. In 1964 he closed it and travelled to Europe, where he met leading potters Lucie Rie (1902-1995), Bernard Leach (1887-1979) and Michael Cardew (1901-1983). He was invited to work at the Gustavsberg factory near Stockholm and later went to Germany, where he started a pottery studio and signed a year's contract to teach at the art academy in Hamburg. In 1967 he returned to South Africa and in 1968 established a studio at *N'Shongweni* in KwaZulu-Natal. Walford has been working in his mountain top studio overlooking the *N'Shongweni* dam and game reserve for nearly 40 years. In 1969 he visited Japan and befriended Shoji Hamada who, amongst others, strongly influenced him (Andrew Walford, 2003). Today Walford is deeply involved with the Japanese and Korean philosophy of pottery, while being influenced by local South African cultures. Japanese painters and calligraphers are masters of the brush stroke and this is evident in both his disciplined method of working and in his use of minimalist brush strokes.

Walford digs his own clay in the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands (Fig 54) and meticulously prepares it by hand to his own requirements (Fig 55 and 56). Although Walford mostly creates functional ware, he found himself attracted to Jumbo tile making.

Fig. 54 **Andrew Walford collecting clay.** The Midlands, KwaZulu-Natal.

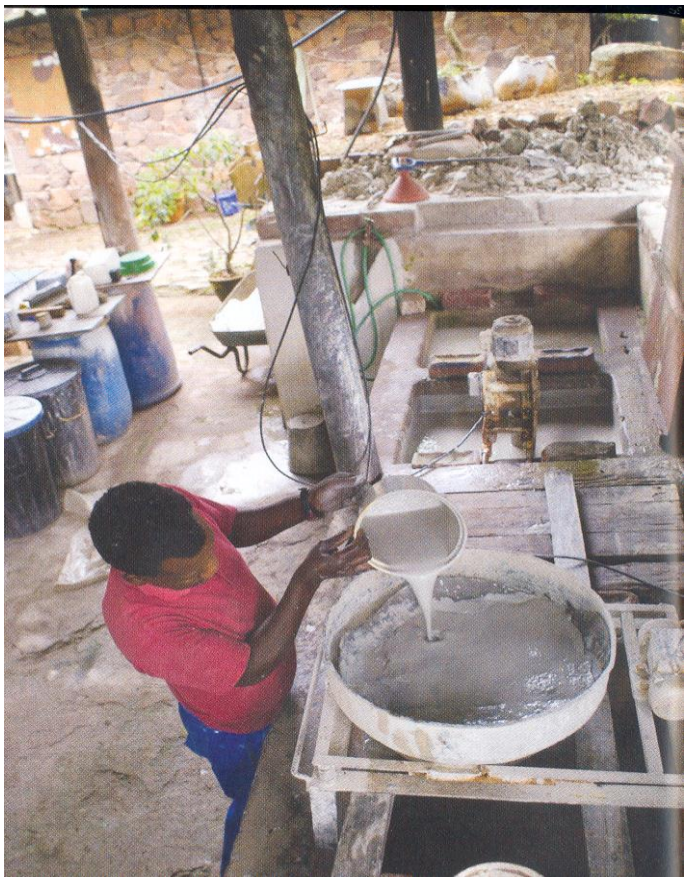

Fig. 55 **The clay mix is sieved.** Walford studio. N'Shongweni, Durban.

Fig. 56 **Pugging the clay.** Walford studio. N'Shongweni, Durban.

Fig. 57 **Andrew Walford unpacks the oil-fired kiln.** Walford studio. N'Shongweni, Durban.

The large flat surfaces allowed him to express himself freely, unlike the smaller curved surfaces of a vase or bowl. According to Walford, there is a demand for the use of tiles as architectural adornment, which has resulted in a number of architectural commissions (Walford, 2012). Examples of these tile murals can be found at the **Durban International Conference Centre** (45 Bram Fischer Road) and the **Old Mutual Building** (Dr. Pixley Ka Seme /West Street) in Durban.

Walford is well known for his jumbo tiles, which are 110cm by 85cm and 2cm thick. He fires them in a specially constructed oil fired kiln (Fig 57). Materials from Germany, which can withstand temperatures of 1400˚C, are used for shelving. Walford makes up to six tiles in one firing (Wright, 2009:23).

3.2.1 The Old Mutual Ceramic Tile Mural (n.d)

The ceramic tile mural situated in the **Old Mutual Building** in Durban (Fig 58), measuring 430cm by 255cm, adorns the wall of the entrance foyer. This was a joint venture with well-known Durban based artist Andrew Verster. Full size drawings were done by Verster and given to Walford (Fig.59) to interpret in clay. Since the Old Mutual Group wanted an artwork that reflected Durban and its people, the elements used within the drawing were intended to be easily identifiable. The mural is infused with symbolism and simplicity of form.

The palm tree that dominates the drawing is taken from a drawing Verster did of a palm tree that he admired next door to his home in Essenwood Road, Durban. The aircraft image (Fig 60) is interpreted as a child's toy aircraft, making reference to Durban's International Airport. The ship likewise is a playful image making reference to Durban's harbour. The map of India (Fig 61) which lies within the map of South Africa is a reference to the Indian decendants in South Africa (Walford, 2012). Typical Indian imagery and designs such as the paisley design (Fig. 62 and Fig. 63) are used.

Fig. 58 Andrew Walford, (n.d). **Old Mutual Building.** Glazed ceramic tile mural. 430cm x 255cm. 300 Dr. Pixley Ka Seme (West) Street, Durban.

Fig. 59 **Andrew Walford interpreting the design for the Old Mutual ceramic tile mural.** Old Mutual Building. 300 Dr. Pixley Ka Seme (West) Street, Durban.

Fig. 60 Andrew Walford, (n.d). **Detail of ceramic tile mural**. The Old Mutual Building. 300 Dr. Pixley Ka Seme (West) Street, Durban.

Fig. 61 Andrew Walford, (n.d). **Detail of ceramic tile mural.** The Old Mutual Building. 300 Dr. Pixley Ka Seme (West) Street, Durban.

Fig. 62 Andrew Walford, (n.d). **Detail of ceramic tile mural.** The Old Mutual Building. 300 Dr. Pixley Ka Seme (West) Street, Durban.

Fig. 63 Andrew Walford, (n.d). **Detail of ceramic tile mural.** The Old Mutual Building. 300 Dr. Pixley Ka Seme (West) Street, Durban.

A hand (Fig 64) represents the classical dance form, *Bharatanatyam* [8]. The hand gesture used here is called *Hamsasye,* which means a Swan's Beak (Nandan, 2008).

Zulu patterns (Fig. 65 and Fig. 66), such as the chevron and triangular shape used on traditional Zulu pots, are referenced. A peacock found at the Umgeni Road Temple in Durban, one of Verster's favourite buildings, is depicted in the bottom centre of the panel (Fig. 58). At the top left (Fig. 58) is a reference to the Bluff in Durban (Verster, 2007). In the mural the detailed drawn images have been simplified to such an extent that they can be described as naïve and childlike. The mural is comprised of twelve jumbo grouted tiles, with a narrow marble border on either side. When asked if there were any challenges in the installation of this project, Walford (2012) said that:

> When we got there to install the tiles, there were marble tiles fixed on either side of the area allocated for the tile panel. We had to then carefully cut my tiles with an angle-grinder, in order to make them fit within the space.

The making of these jumbo tiles has been perfected over the years. The composition of the stoneware clay is different as it contains an amount of shredded quality paper and twenty percent more grog. The paper adds flexibility to the tile, so that it can be moved safely before firing. Walford has constructed a large plaster slab, larger than the tile to be made to counteract shrinkage from firing, which is used as a mould for the production of the tiles. Wax is placed on the surface to prevent sticking when the clay shrinks. Wooden battens are used to obtain the exact size and thickness of the tiles, within which the clay is poured (Fig 67). A good deal of moisture is soaked up by the plaster. As the level of the slip sinks, more slip is poured in. Walford then uses an infra-red heater to dry the tile. This heater is moved every 20-30 minutes so that the tile dries out evenly. When the tile is sufficiently dry, the battens are removed (Wright, 2009:24). The tile is now ready for scraping and inserting items used in the decoration. While it is still soft, Walford scratches through the clay. Walford makes stamps out of Plaster of Paris with various patterns, and uses them over wet slip.

8. *Bharatanatyam* originates in South India and combines hand movements that act as a form of sign language to help to tell a story or demonstrate themes such as weather, animals or places (Nandan, 2008).

Fig. 64 Andrew Walford, (n.d). **Detail of ceramic tile mural.** The Old Mutual Building. 300 Dr. Pixley Ka Seme (West) Street, Durban.

Fig. 65 Andrew Walford, (n.d). **Detail of ceramic tile mural.** The Old Mutual Building. 300 Dr. Pixley Ka Seme (West) Street, Durban.

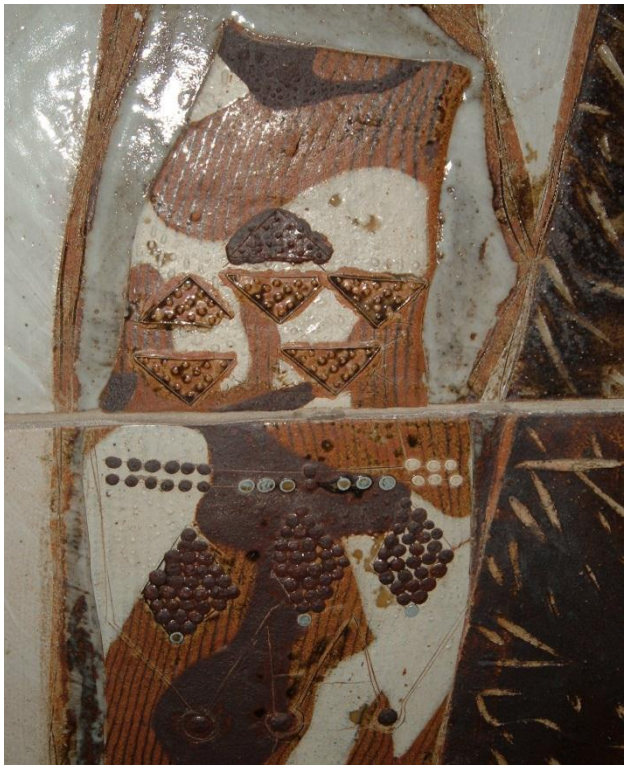

Fig. 66 Andrew Walford, (n.d). **Detail of ceramic tile mural.** The Old Mutual Building. 300 Dr. Pixley Ka Seme (West) Street, Durban.

Fig. 67 **Andrew Walford smears paper clay on a Plaster of Paris bat.** Walford studio. N'Shongweni, Kwa-Zulu Natal.

As in the tile panel at the entrance to the Old Mutual building, Walford uses cardboard as stencils and presses different layers of porcelain and dark stoneware slip, or clay through the stencils to create images (Fig 68).

The tile is dried again by the infra-red heater for a whole day, and moved to a board. The tile is first fired with gas for six hours, then oil fired for fourteen hours to a temperature of 1350˚C. Walford (2011) explained that:

> The tile has not been bisque-fired, so it is important to increase the temperature slowly. It is tricky with oil firing as it gets hot spots very quickly and at 1100˚C the tile bends up like a potato crisp, and then goes flat again at about 1250˚C.

The tiles are decorated using big Japanese brushes often with splodges of indigenous Chun glaze[9] (Fig 69) (Walford, 2011). The natural colours in his work are reminiscent of reflecting afternoon sun and shadows on the cliffs rising steeply next to his home.

The blue lines evident in the Old Mutual tile mural (Fig 58) were achieved with a Chun glaze, which changes with variations in light. This Chun glaze is applied with a soup ladle (Walford, 2011). The Old Mutual tile mural is located in the narrow entrance foyer to the elevators. The viewer is immediately confronted with the mural. The mural adds interest to a space that would otherwise be dull and intimidating.

3.2.2 Isikothi (Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre) (1994)

The Ceramic tile panels at the **Inkosi Albert Luthuli Convention Centre** (Fig. 70 and Fig. 71) were completed in 1994. The artwork consists of two separate panels adorning the curved bar walls at the main entrance to the Inkosi Albert Luthuli Convention Centre. The low-lying drop ceilings within the bar areas house the downlighters that artificially light the ceramic panels. Each panel consists of five images of *Isikothi*, the traditional Zulu beaded wedding cape, which is worn by the bride around her shoulders during the wedding ceremony, as a sign of respect to the family she is marrying into. The cape is generally made out of beaded panels that are stitched together. Each panel is made by a member of the family or a relative (Dube, 2009:78).

9. Chun glaze is a very thick wood ash glaze. It is one of the first glazes the Chinese discovered using wood ash (Walford, 2011).

Fig. 68 **Andrew Walford uses cut-out cardboard stencils and presses in terracotta and porcelain clay.** Walford studio. N'Shongweni, Kwa-Zulu Natal.

Fig. 69 **Andrew Walford with jumbo tiles showing Japanese brushstrokes.** Walford studio. N'Shongweni, Kwa-Zulu Natal.

The letters and initials would be beaded by the bride herself as a symbol of sharing her happiness. It could also represent her initials or her lover's initials (Dube, 2009:78). Here, Walford's intention was to use colours and imagery symbolic of the African way of life.

The first panel in the third *Isikothi* image (Fig. 70) contains the phrase 'Sam sunny skies' and references the name given to Walford's eldest son who died in a car crash (Walford, 2011). Other recognisable lettering found in the panel include 'USA' and 'RSA', in keeping with the function of the Conference Centre as an international meeting place.

On both panels, the bigger tiles that depict the Zulu beaded wedding cape consist of layers of rolled out stoneware and porcelain clay, infused with African symbols and design. The five images of *Isikothi* in each panel are surrounded by smaller tiles. Within the first panel (Fig. 70 and Fig. 71) protruding calabash shapes, which resemble African beer pots, were thrown on the wheel and later attached to the smaller tiles which consist of abstract bird-like forms decorated with different colour slips (Walford, 2011). These smaller tiles were made using stoneware clay, while the jumbo tiles within this panel were made using porcelain with layers of stoneware clay and slip.

On the second panel (Fig. 72), people from the *N'Shongweni* area were asked to decorate the smaller tiles using cobalt and iron oxide. Images included the local fauna and flora found in the area such as birds, frogs, gheckos, fish and plant life as well as symbols and designs found in Zulu culture. According to Wright (2009:24), these small tiles are reminiscent of tiles that are used as a skirting embellishment, or set in the floor as threshold detail, as splash backs in kitchens and bathrooms or as a support to the ever popular hand thrown hand basins. These smaller tiles were made using porcelain clay. The jumbo tiles within this panel were made with stoneware clay and a few layers of porcelain clay and slip to create the Zulu wedding cape (Fig. 74).
Abstract relief forms of fauna and flora are found on both panels. The horn-like shape found on the jumbo tiles (Fig. 74), represents the necklace worn by Zulu women. This is created using

Fig. 70 Andrew Walford, 1994. ***Isikothi* (panel1)**. 160mm x 3085mm. Ceramic tiles. Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Conference Centre. 45 Bram Fischer Road, Durban.

Fig. 71 Andrew Walford, 1994. **Detail of Isikothi (panel1)**. Ceramic tiles. Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Conference Centre. 45 Bram Fischer Road, Durban.

Fig. 72 Andrew Walford, 1994. **Isikothi (panel 2)**. 160mm x 3085mm. Ceramic tiles. Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Conference Centre. 45 Bram Fischer Road, Durban.

Fig. 73 Andrew Walford, 1994. **Detail of Isikothi (panel 2)**. Ceramic tiles. Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Conference Centre. 45 Bram Fischer Road, Durban.

different clays, pressed out, rolled and bent. The beadwork that embellishes the panels was created by women from the *N'Shongweni* area (Walford, 2011).

When a woman marries before giving birth to a child, the cape is augmented with long hanging beads as a symbol of virginity. These beads come from attire worn as a girl (Dube, 2009:78).

One of the challenges experienced during this project was when a tile had cracked after being installed, due to a ladder being bolted on in the inspection hatch behind the tile panel. The tile then had to be carefully removed, so as not to damage the surrounding tiles, and remade to fit the space (Walford, 2011).

The tile panels create areas of intrigue, while adding an aura of relaxation to the surrounding environment. While the viewer feels the need for a closer inspection of the tiles, the surrounding bar counter forms a restrictive barrier. Nevertheless, the tile panels add to the aesthetics of the architecture and the column-free space allows the artworks to be easily seen from afar. The rich surface of these panels and the protruding calabash shapes are reminiscent of the detailed textures used in Gaudi's mosaic facades in Barcelona, Spain.

Walford has made a unique contribution to the use of ceramics as an aesthetic element in Durban architecture. Despite his struggles to establish himself, he has earned himself a well-respected name in the ceramic art industry. Walford has developed a personal working method in the Anglo-Oriental tradition, influenced by African (Zulu) imagery and design, using a large scale tile format.

Fig. 74 Andrew Walford, 1994. **Detail of Isikothi (panel 2)**. Ceramic tiles. Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Conference Centre. 45 Bram Fischer Road, Durban.

3.3. Jane du Rand (b. 1969)

Jane du Rand grew up in Kloof, Durban. After spending one year at the Michaelis School of Fine Art at the University of Cape Town, du Rand enrolled at the University of Natal (now the University of KwaZulu-Natal) and graduated with a Bachelor of Architecture. Du Rand then completed a Post Graduate Diploma in Architecture which enabled her to register as an architect with the South African Council for Architects (Miller, 2007).

Both during and after her degree, du Rand spent time working for an architect in Vienna and developed a passion for Viennese Art Nouveau and Art Deco architecture and art. She was influenced by the 'secession movement' in Vienna (Schauffer, 2006). This movement included painters, sculptors, and architects whom were concerned, above all else, with exploring the possibilities of art outside the confines of academic tradition. They hoped to create a new style that owed nothing to historical influence (Vienna secession, 2012). Du Rand (2012) states:

> I made a point of visiting the secession buildings. I think their use of decorative ceramic elements on the facades of the buildings and all the decorative elements, most of which were ceramic inside the buildings were very inspiring. Looking at these buildings made me realise that one can, and why not, put ceramics and patterns etc. onto the fronts of buildings! (du Rand, 2012).

This decorative use of architectural ornament remained etched in her memory. The intricate layered work of artist Gustav Klimt, the first president of the Secession, was influential in the development of Du Rand's artistic practice. As a practicing architect, du Rand became involved in ceramic and mosaic projects that were linked to buildings. This provided an opportunity to combine her interest in art and architecture (du Rand, 2012).

She established a mosaic studio in 1998 and has since undertaken numerous public and private ceramic and mosaic commissions in South Africa and abroad. Projects in and around public buildings called for community participation; as a result the studio is often filled with participants from various backgrounds, whom she trains in ceramic and mosaic techniques (Miller, 2007). The design for images is kept simple and gives selected local artists free reign to interpret images within du Rand's design parameters (Schauffer, 2006).

Du Rand creates her mosaics with a variety of different elements such as hand-crafted and hand-

glazed ceramic forms, commercial tiles and mosaics, shells, beads, mirror, broken crockery and pebbles. Her mosaics are often laden with meaning and intricate attention to detail. In the article *Mosaic Mastery,* Schauffer (2006) indicated that:

> Her [du Rand's] custom-made ceramics can mimic nature's colours, imitate sea shells or hint abstractly at human forms; some respond to weathering, some to water, and others to light. The scope and palette is vast and largely unexplored.

Du Rand works closely with her clients at the design stage of the project, while including her own artistic flair. She often takes the surrounding environment into consideration when creating the artwork, so that people can relate to the work (du Rand, 2012). Du Rand (2012) said that "I get to know the people, the space, the environment ... and then design in response to all those elements".

Du Rand (2012), commenting on the use of ceramics as an architectural adornment notes:

> Mosaic work has increased over the years. It is an accessible medium, and people in the general public can identify and relate to it. It is also a successful way of including artwork onto a building since it is more durable than a painting. Architects are now looking for ways to include artworks on buildings since there is more of a public spend on that.

I worked with du Rand from July 2002 until December 2005, during which time the studio was engaged with various ceramic and mosaic projects. I became involved in the mosaic layouts, the design and production of ceramic elements, as well as the installation of the final artwork. With the experience I gained, I was confident enough to undertake my first big mosaic project in 2003, which led me in 2006 to register a company *Truarts Studio*, with the employment of eight people. This development in my career will be discussed in Chapter Three.

Amongst du Rand's many works, the mosaic floor titled **Red Carpet** (Figs. 75-78) at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre and the mosaics for the K-RITH building at the **Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine** (Figs. 73-91) have been selected for discussion as they provide evidence of du Rand's unique approach to the use of ceramics as an aesthetic element in Durban architecture.

3.3.1 The Red Carpet (Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre) (2008)

The client, the eThekwini Municipality, wanted to create a welcoming red carpet leading from the street to the entrance of the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre (ICC). There was a perception that the entrance to the first phase of the building was alienating to the man in the street

and reserved only for VIP's and dignitaries (Miller, 2007).

Keeping this in mind, du Rand took the design of the building into consideration by referencing the rectangular beams used in the ceilings to create rectangular panels as a stepping stone into the building, creating a sense of progression. Each panel was designed to add a different experience in terms of colour, texture and patterns used. Du Rand referenced traditional African and Indian fabric, re-interpreting them in a contemporary context. She aimed at combining the use of pebbles, ceramic and mosaic to create a surface of texture and colour with an African feel, relevant to the city of Durban (Figs. 76-77).

Du Rand used ceramic floor tiles that are thicker and more durable than wall tiles. Square and round ceramic frames were hand-crafted and fired to stoneware temperature (1200°C) (Fig. 78). Du Rand used underglaze with a stoneware transparent glaze for increased durability. Hand-crafted frames were intricately filled with ceramic and glass tiles and either laid out amongst pebbles or broken pieces of glazed tile, or clustered together to form a panel (Fig. 78) (du Rand, 2012).
The total dimension of the work is $60m^2$, with the panels ranging in lengths from 800mm. The pathway took four months to complete. The result is an intricate and detailed walkway of red hues that leads one into the building: a well-executed piece that is successful in its aim.

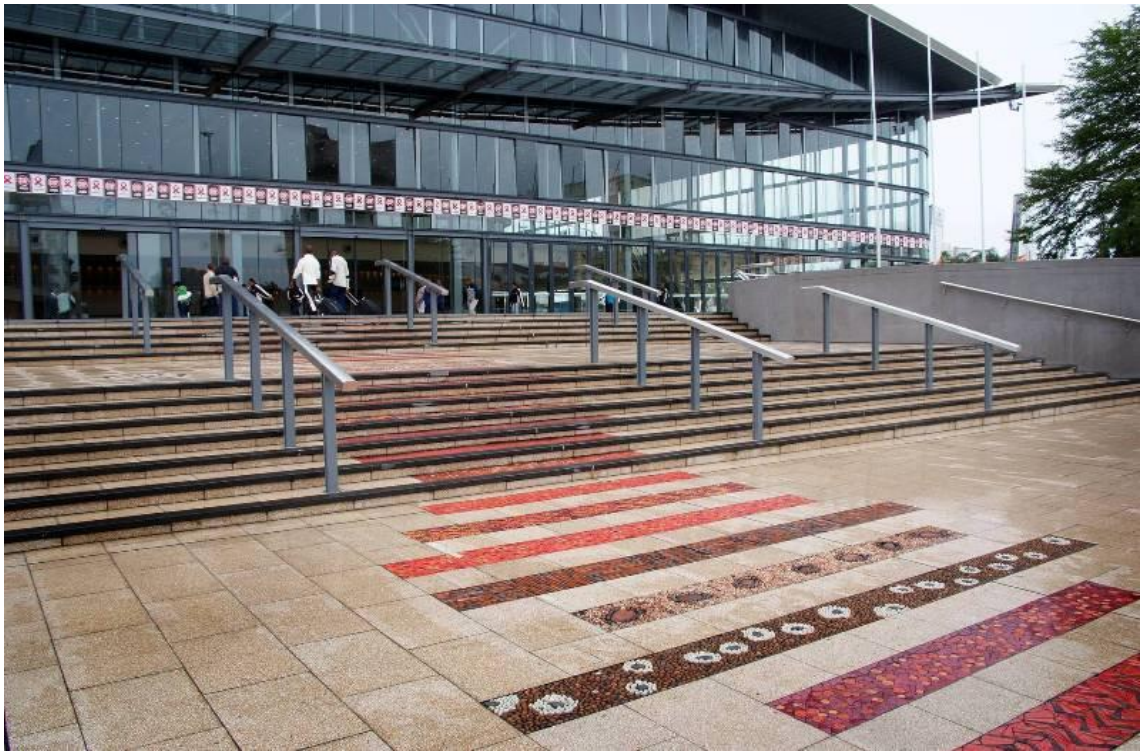

Fig. 75 Jane du Rand, 2008. **Red Carpet**. Mosaic floor inserts.Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre, 45 Bram Fischer Road, Durban.

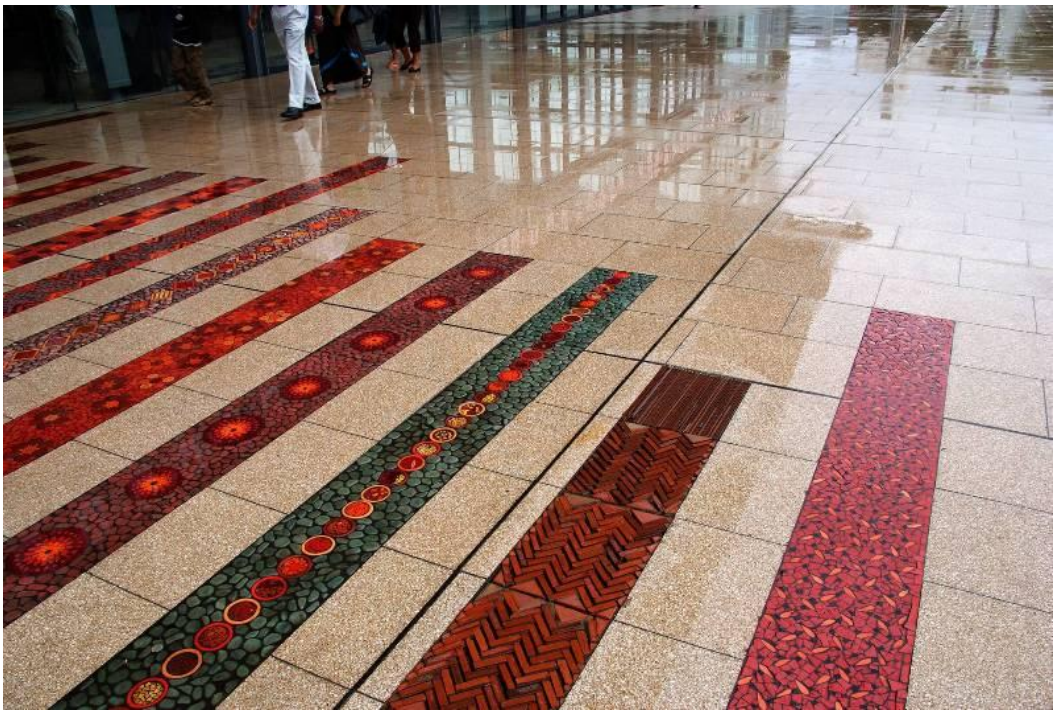

Fig. 76 Jane du Rand, 2008. **Red Carpet**. Mosaic floor inserts. Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre, 45 Bram Fischer Road, Durban.

Fig. 77 Jane du Rand, 2008. **Detail of Red Carpet**. Mosaic floor inserts. Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre, 45 Bram Fischer Road, Durban.

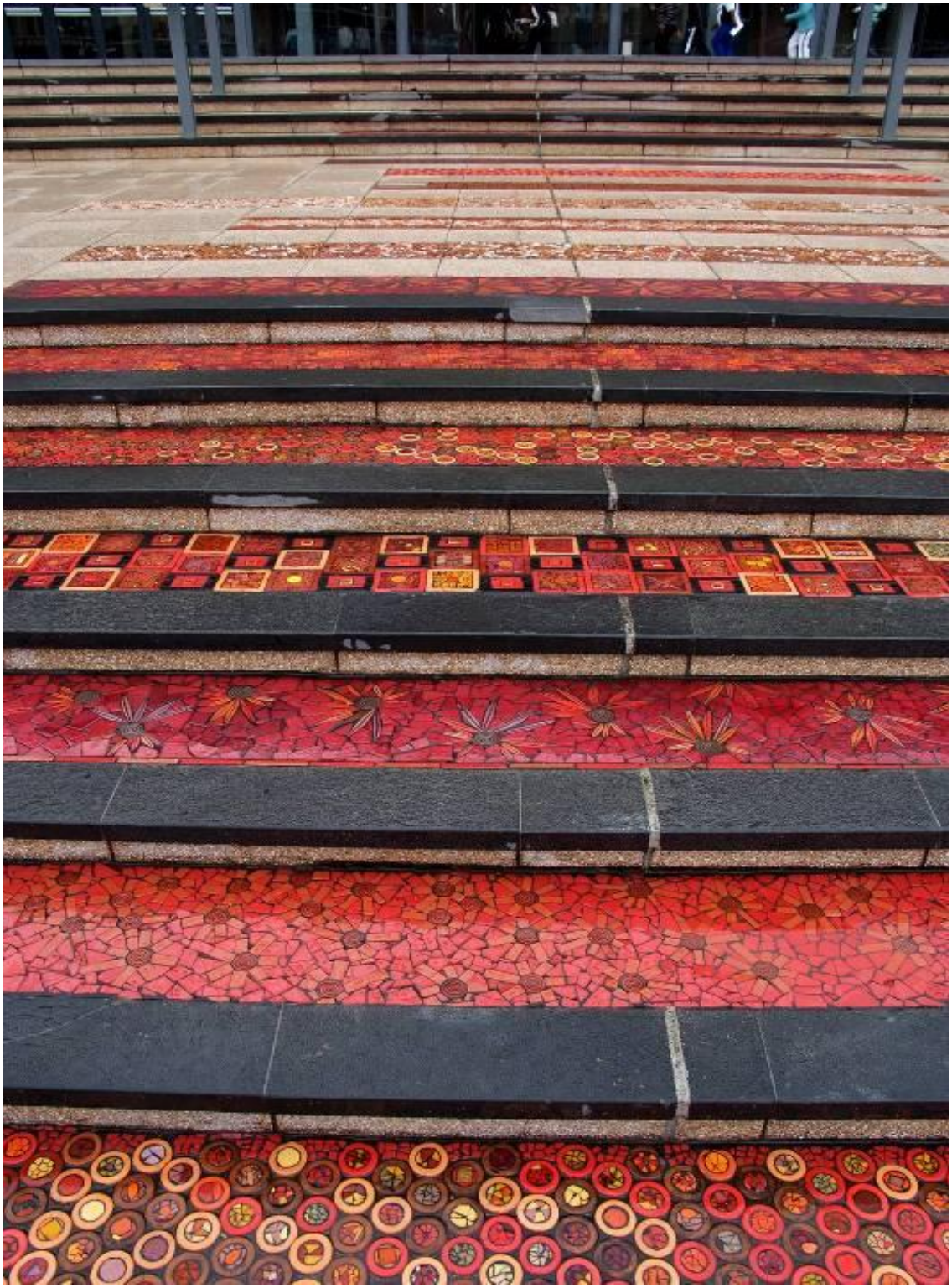

Fig. 78 Jane du Rand, 2008. **Detail of Red Carpet**. Mosaic floor inserts. Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre, 45 Bram Fischer Road, Durban.

3.3.2 Healing or Medicinal Plants mosaic (2012)

The KwaZulu-Natal Research Institute for Tuberculosis (TB) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) (K-RITH) comprises of a ground breaking collaboration between the Howard Hughes Medical Institute in the United States of America and the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. K-RITH's mission is to conduct basic science research on TB and HIV (K-RITH, 2012). The four mosaic artwork installations were designed for various different locations in, and adjacent to, the K-RITH building which is located on the campus of the Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Durban.

Jeremy Hathorn, principal architect for FGG Architects wanted to integrate art into the architecture at K-RITH. Hathorn (in Hennig, 2012:6) stated that he wanted to imbue the building with a sense of spirit, and in so doing, to convey a narrative about what the building represents, this being the pursuit of cures for tuberculosis and HIV.

Du Rand was briefed by K-RITH's chief operating officer, Costa Criticos. He suggested that du Rand produce abstract iconic representations of medical research. He also requested a social development dimension, which would involve working with and training assistants (Hennig, 2012:6). Du Rand employed young people living with HIV, and previous TB sufferers to assist with the project (du Rand, 2012).

While du Rand designed each area individually, she also ensured that the areas maintained a relationship with each other. The four installations represent the themes of Healing or Medicinal Plants (Figs. 79-88), Healing Mandalas (92-95), Cells, Viruses and Plant Fractals (Figs. 89-90) and The DNA Strip (Figs. 96-99).

In every commission undertaken by du Rand, a drawing is first prepared that highlights her ideas and conceptual framework. These drawings are first approved by the client before the onset of the project. The drawings for the mosaics at the KRITH building were composed as a collage. Research was undertaken on the individual concepts via the internet. These images, together with images taken from her previously completed mosaics, were printed and pasted together to form the design. Du

Rand also made use of watercolour in her drawings (Fig. 81) (du Rand, 2012). In discussing the design process she indicated that “When I set about researching images of cells, viruses and healing plants, I found a lot of images were circular, which inspired ideas for the rest of the work” (du Rand, 2012).

The Healing or Medicinal Plants mosaic covers both sides of the curved wall (Fig. 79 and Fig. 85) that leads to the entrance of the KRITH building. The images portrayed here are of indigenous plants used for healing or medicinal purposes, emphasising the traditional approaches to medicine. Since the use of medicinal plants is commonly associated with African culture, du Rand used this as a concept that would relate to the African people of Durban (du Rand, 2012).

On the outside of the wall the plant images are composed inside thirty-three large round disks (Figs. 79 and 80) that increase in number as one approaches the entrance. The disks range from 600mm to 1m in diameter. Each disk is framed with handmade tiles, glazed with letters, indicating the name of the plant shown within the disk (Fig. 82-84). The images of the plants are large scale in keeping with the large scale of the wall. The top of the wall is covered with a green glazed ceramic coping that is visible on both sides of the wall.

The inside of the wall facing the garden depicts the medicinal plants in a continuous band that spans a length of thirty-two metres (Fig. 85-88). The organic edge along the bottom of the mosaic panel is made up of green glazed handmade tiles that indicate the name of the plant shown within the mosaic.

In terms of the production process the layouts of the mosaics are completed in the studio. Du Rand uses fibre-cement boards that are cut according to the size and shape of the mosaics required. The drawings are then traced onto these boards. A layer of Keycoat is painted on to improve the adhesion of the Flex glue. This glue is then used to fix the mosaic to the board.

Fig. 79 Jane du Rand, 2012. **Disks on the curved garden wall entrance.** Mosaic and glazed tiles. K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

Fig. 80 Jane du Rand, 2012. **Mosaic disks on the curved garden wall entrance.** K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

Fig. 81 Jane du Rand, 2012. **Watercolour and collage of Indigenous Healing or Medicinal Plants**. K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine. University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

Fig. 82 Jane du Rand, 2012. **Detail of Indigenous Healing or Medicinal Plants**. Mosaic and glazed tiles. K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

Fig. 83 Jane du Rand, 2012. **Detail of Indigenous Healing or Medicinal Plants**. Mosaic and glazed tiles. K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

Fig. 84 Jane du Rand, 2012. **Detail of Indigenous Healing or Medicinal Plants**. Mosaic and glazed tiles. K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

Fig. 85 Jane du Rand, 2012. **Indigenous Healing or Medicinal Plants**. Ceramic and glass mosaic on the inside of the curved garden wall entrance.K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

Fig. 86 Jane du Rand, 2012. **Indigenous Healing or Medicinal Plants**. Ceramic and glass mosaic on the inside of the curved garden wall entrance. K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

Fig. 87 Jane du Rand, 2012. **Detail of Indigenous Healing or Medicinal Plants**. Ceramic and glass mosaic on the inside of the curved garden wall entrance. K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

Fig. 88 Jane du Rand, 2012. **Detail of Indigenous Healing or Medicinal Plants**. Ceramic and glass mosaic on the inside of the curved garden wall entrance. K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

Each piece of tile or ceramic element is glued on individually, with variations in size and shape, to create visual texture (Fig. 88). In Figure 87 small triangular pieces are used to create the thorny edge of the aloe plant. This helps to immediately identify the plant. In Figure 88 smaller pieces of tiles are used as a background that creates contrast and texture. Tonal variations are achieved by using different shades of a certain colour tile (Fig. 89). Du Rand (2012) explained that the incredibly labour intensive work evolves from being representational – watercolour depictions of rooibos plants, aloes and the HIV virus, for example – into textured and interconnected patterns and shapes.

Du Rand's mosaics are rich with colour, texture, and simplicity of form. The simplification of form and the use of large flat areas of colour in Figure 82 are reminiscent of modernist abstraction evident in the work of Gustav Klimt and the Viennese Secessionists who influenced du Rand. In most of du Rand's mosaics, large tiles are cut according to the size and shape required and assembled into rich and complex patterns.

3.3.3 Cells, viruses and plant fractals mosaic mural (2012)

This vertical rectangular mural (Fig. 89), measuring 11m x 2m, on the façade of the building comprises forty six square and rectangular mosaic panels. It has a visual connection to the mural on the parking garage wall (Fig. 91), where the mosaics are divided into a grid of squares. Images on the vertical wall (Fig. 90) reference cells and viruses, together with images of plant fractals. The cells and viruses symbolise western culture and research into medicine. The plant fractals have a relationship with the medicinal plants on the curved wall (Figs. 79 and 85), and the cells and viruses relate to the shapes of the mandalas on the floor inserts inside the building (Figs. 92-95) (du Rand, 2012).

The mosaic mural lies between the third and fifth floor, and casts reflections on the glass curtain wall perpendicular to it (Fig. 90). The moulded and glazed ceramic elements add a three dimensionality to the mosaic mural that create interesting shadows as the light falls on them

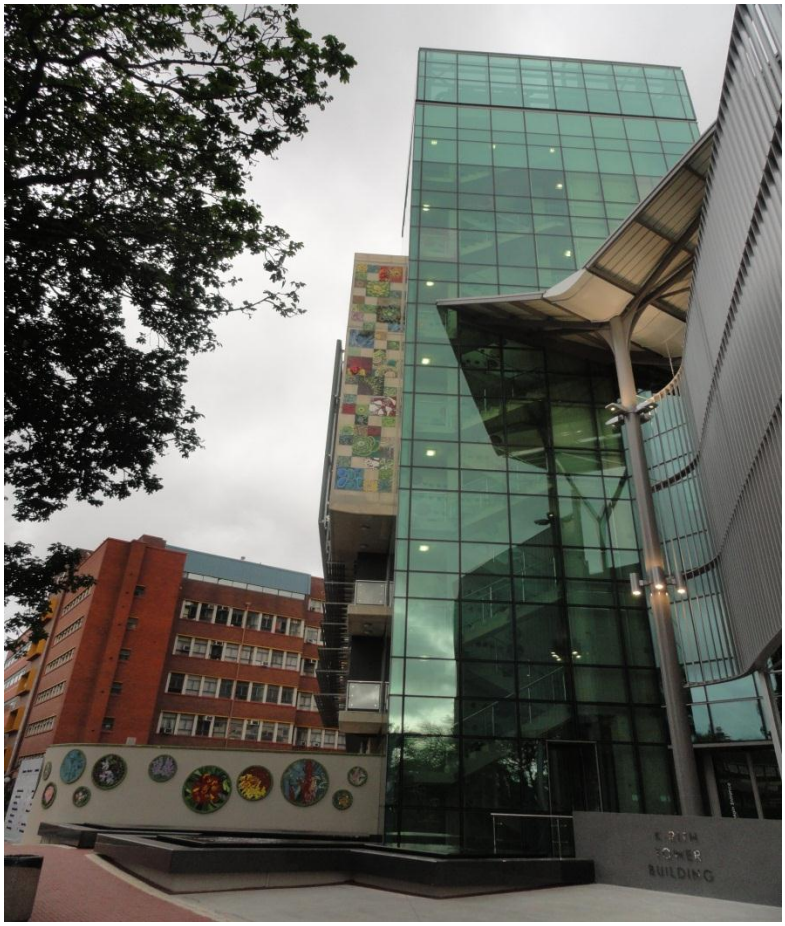

Fig. 89 Jane du Rand, 2012. **Cells, viruses and plant fractals**. Mosaic on facade of the building. K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

Fig. 90 Jane du Rand, 2012. **Detail of Cells, viruses and plant fractals**. Ceramic mosaic on facade of the building. K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

(Fig. 90). The bold and sculptural surface, where the mosaics become architectural, is reminiscent of the mosaics of architect and artist Antonio Gaudi (1852-1926). It is a visually stimulating mural that draws ones attention to the vertical nature of the architecture.

3.3.4 Healing Mandalas. Mosaic floor insert (2012)

In the reception area, leading into the building, detailed mosaic floor inserts create areas of focus (Fig. 92-95). The colours used here are predominantly reds and greens on a dark background. A large disk, 6m in diameter, is made up of disks of various sizes (Fig. 92).

Smaller disks, predominantly red, are clustered in the centre, while larger green disks are scattered towards the edge (Fig. 93). The circular shapes found here have a relationship with the disks on the curved outside wall (Fig. 79). However, the images portrayed here are of healing mandalas (Fig. 95). A mandala (Sanskrit for circle) is a sacred, symbolic diagram, used as a meditational aid in Buddhism and Hinduism. Psychoanalyst Carl Jung (1865-1961) saw the mandala as "a representation of the unconscious self" (Mandala, 2013). Here, du Rand referenced Eastern healing traditions and the strong presence of Indian culture in Durban.

From the main circle the mandalas lead outwards, within strips of mosaics (Fig. 94), into the rest of the building. The juxtaposition of the different sized disks in various groups makes reference to the patterns and shapes found in images of cells and viruses, a concept used on the façade of the building.

3.3.5 The DNA Strip. Stairwell wall mosaic (2012)

The DNA strip on the six storeys high interior stairwell wall (Figs. 96 and 97), is portrayed using a series of a hundred and twenty mosaic disks protruding from the wall to a thickness of 50mm. These disks are 500mm in diameter and were constructed using polystyrene, covered with fibreglass mesh and coated with material one and clad with handcrafted and glazed ceramic pieces (Fig. 98) (du Rand, 2012).

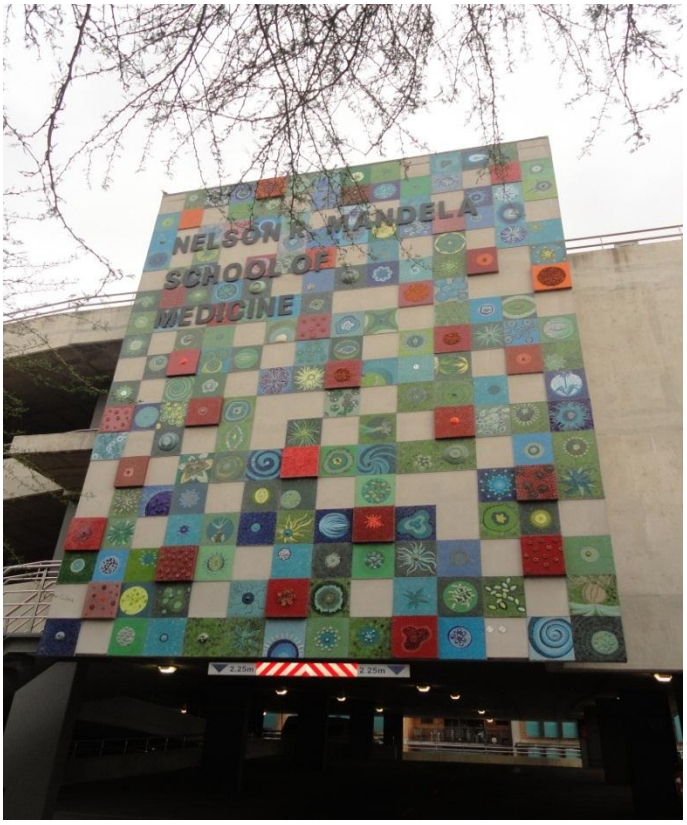

Fig. 91 Jane du Rand, 2012. **Parking garage wall**. Ceramic mosaic. K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

Fig. 92 Jane du Rand, 2012. **Healing Mandalas**. Mosaic floor insert. K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

Fig. 93 Jane du Rand, 2012. **Healing Mandalas**. Mosaic floor insert. K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

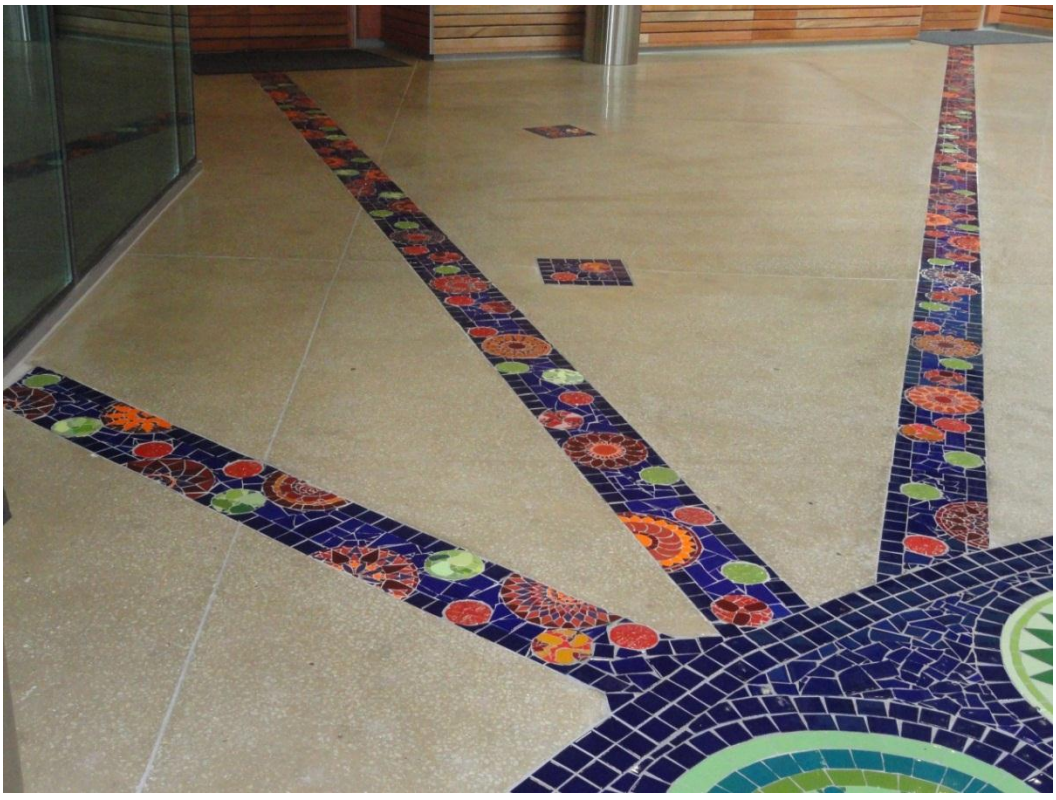

Fig. 94 Jane du Rand, 2012. **Healing Mandalas**. Mosaic floor insert. K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

Fig. 95 Jane du Rand, 2012. **Detail of Healing Mandalas**. Mosaic floor insert. K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

The Sugar Phosphate Backbone and the base pairs found in the double helix DNA are symbolised using the ceramic clad disks and slip-cast, blue glazed plates respectively. The shapes of these disks, as well as the use of green and red, have a relationship with the round mosaic inserts in the flooring (Fig. 93). Each disk is treated slightly differently in terms of the patterning and mosaic pieces used. The mosaic mural is unified by colour and the consistent size of each disk.

The mosaic image of the double helix (Fig. 97-99) leads one up the staircase, on a visually stimulating journey. The stairwell lies within a glass curtain wall, allowing the viewer to experience the mosaics on the curved garden wall and the mosaics on the façade (Fig. 100).

It is clear that du Rand has taken the function of the architecture, which houses a research institute for Tuberculosis (TB) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), into consideration when designing the mosaics for the K-RITH building through referencing healing or medicinal plants, cells, viruses and plant fractals, healing mandalas and the DNA strip. In addition, the placement and design of the mosaic panels enhances movement through the architecture. The mosaics on the outside wall (Fig. 79) increase in number as one approaches the entrance, leading one into the building. The large vertical wall outside (Fig. 89) is deliberately designed in a more decorative way to counteract large concrete areas. In the reception area (Fig.92), the mandalas lead outwards within strips of mosaics (Fig. 94) into the rest of the building. The use of large areas of mosaics both inside and outside the building provides a strong aesthetic appeal to the architecture that is visually stimulating and informative.

A discussion of the tile and mosaic work by James Hall, Andrew Walford and Jane du Rand reflects Modernist and Post-Modernist approaches as well as a reference to European traditions and local content. This provides a context for a discussion of my art practice in Chapter Four.

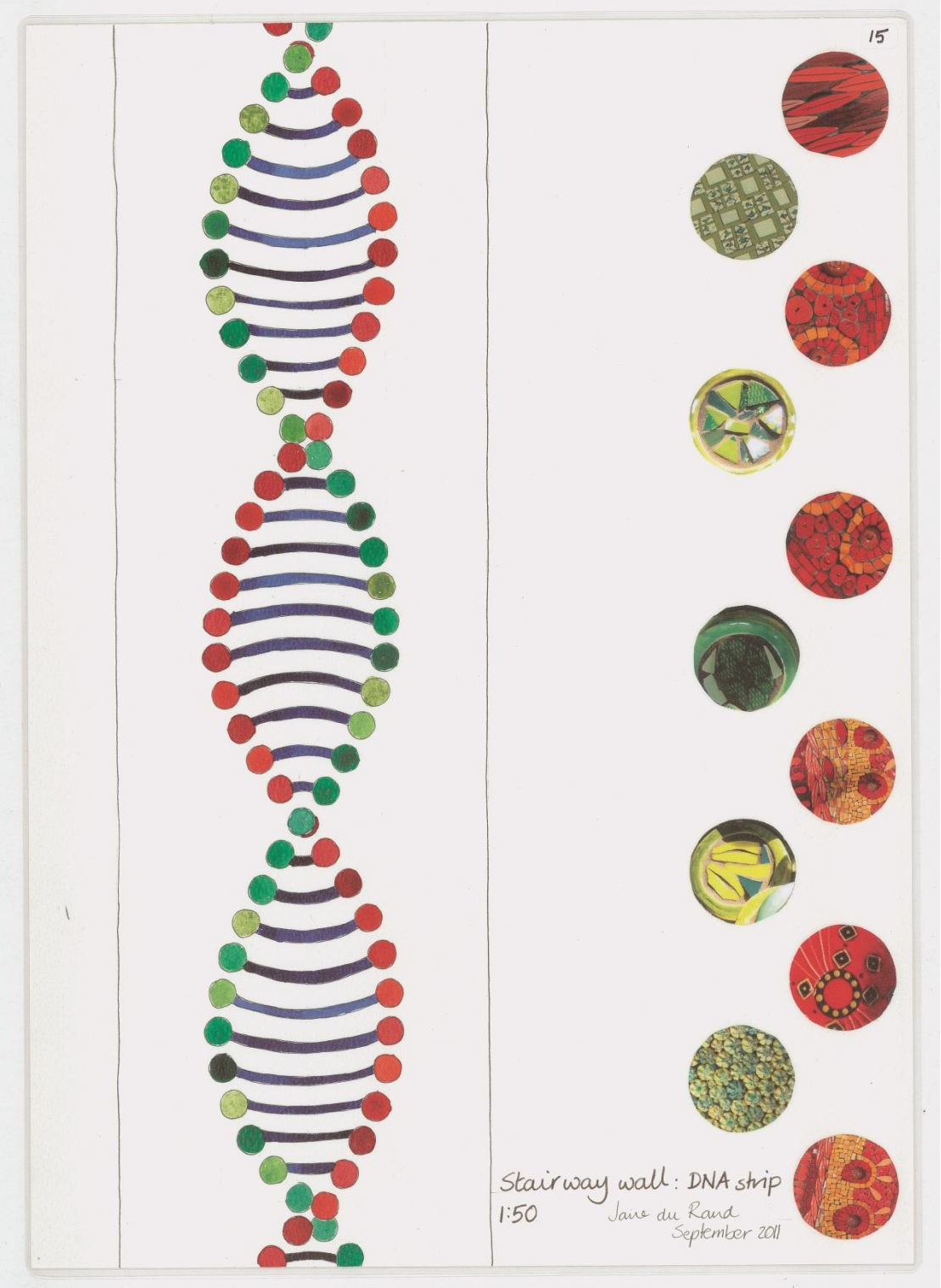

Fig. 96 Jane du Rand, 2012. **The DNA Strip**. Drawing showing mosaic on stairwell wall. K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

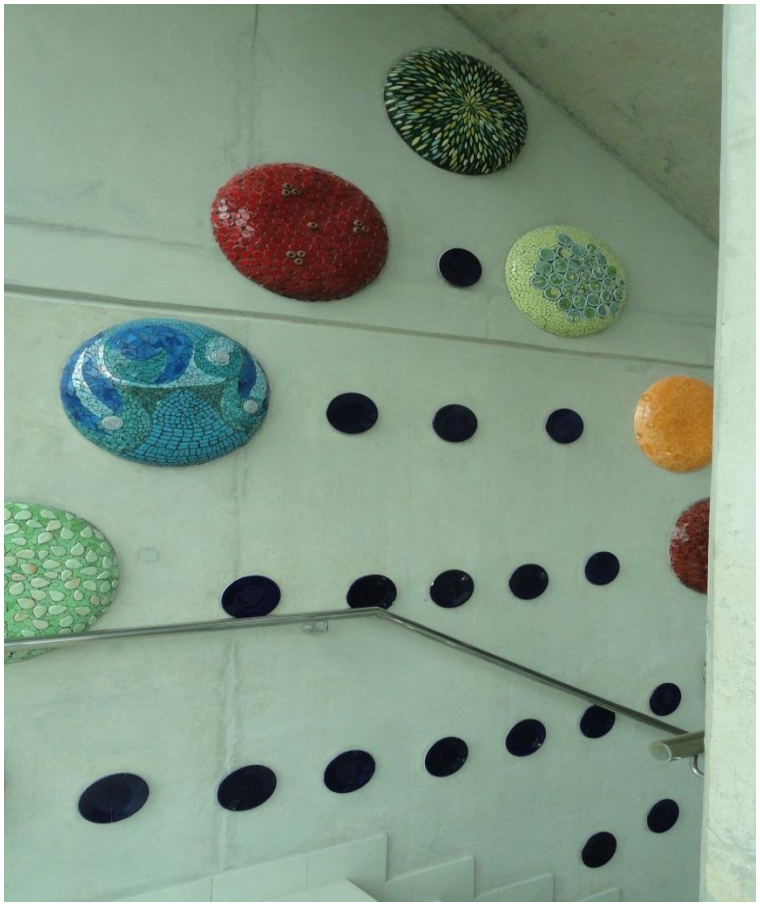

Fig. 97 Jane du Rand, 2012. **The DNA Strip**. Glass and ceramic mosaic on stairwell wall. K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

Fig. 98 Jane du Rand, 2012. **Detail of The DNA Strip**. Ceramic and glass mosaic on stairwell wall. K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

Fig. 99 Jane du Rand, 2012. **Detail of The DNA Strip**. Ceramic and glass mosaic on stairwell wall. K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

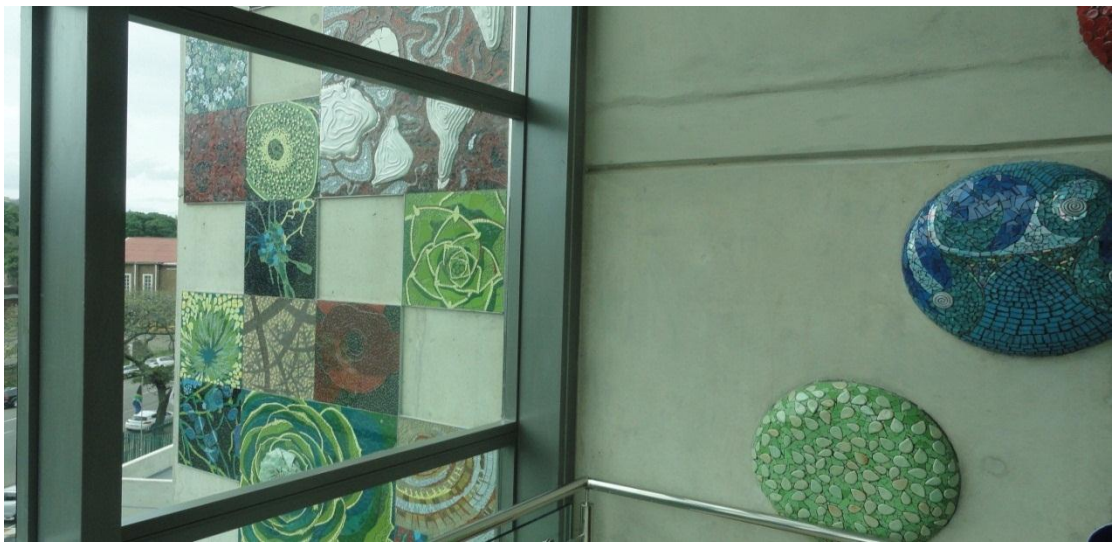

Fig. 100 Jane du Rand, 2012. **Detail of The DNA Strip**. Ceramic and glass mosaic on stairwell wall. K-RITH Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

CHAPTER FOUR: SECTION ONE

THE USE OF MOSAICS AS AN AESTHETIC ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENT IN DURBAN BY RAKSHA PADARUTH.

Since graduating with a Bachelors Degree of Technology: Fine Art, majoring in ceramics, I have been involved in a number of commissions using tiles and mosaics as aesthetic architectural elements. A number of these commissions were completed between June 2002 and December 2005 as part of a team working at Jane du Rand's mosaic studio. It was here that I acquired the skills to work on large-scale mosaic projects. I was given the opportunity to see projects through to the installation stage. As a result I learnt about the different techniques and materials required to successfully complete a mosaic project. In August 2003, I was approached by The Durban City Architects, to execute a mosaic mural for the newly built Chatsworth Youth Centre in Durban.

4.1 Memorial Wall (2003)

Former president Nelson Mandela had made a promise to build a youth centre in memory of the thirteen youngsters who died in a stampede at the Throb Nightclub in March 2000. Mandela told the community of Chatsworth that he would have the centre built as an alternative to nightclubs in order to bring youngsters together (Mbanjwa, 2003).

The ceramic mosaic mural, measuring 18m^2, was designed as a concave memorial wall (Fig. 102) overlooking the amphitheatre. A mosaic tile panel (Fig. 101) at the entrance to the youth centre names the building. The brief received from the client was to create a memorial wall that included the names of the thirteen youngsters that had died. The names of the deceased were embossed on lazer-cut aluminium plates and placed at the bottom of the memorial wall. The initials of the deceased were created within ceramic plaques that symbolised stars in a cosmic space (Fig. 103). Initial drawings to scale (Fig. 104) were first completed using watercolour. Once the drawing was accepted by the client, the project took two months to complete.

The scale drawing was enlarged to the actual size of the wall and ceramic tiles in various colours were ordered. The cosmic space comprised of different shades of blue tiles that were cut and mixed to create tonal variations. The clay plaques were made using terracotta clay. The initials were

centralised within a lotus flower, which in Indian culture symbolises purity, divine beauty, resurrection, and enlightenment (Fig. 103) (Lotus Flower Online, 2012). The initials and representation of the lotus flower were glazed with an antique silver glaze. The mural consisted of other heavenly bodies that were made with earthenware clay and glazed in tones of red, yellow and blue (Fig. 103).

The tiles and ceramic elements were laid out in sections, covered with gum tape, netted and transported to site. This method of production is known as the in-direct method invented during the mid to late nineteenth century in Murano, Italy and has been proven to be a faster method of production than the direct method.

Through having their deceased children's names commemorated on a wall at the Chatsworth Youth Centre some parents have come to terms with the deaths of their children at the Throb nightclub. For Lazarus Soobramoney, seeing his son's name up on the memorial wall was therapeutic. Soobramoney says, "I just went warm all over. My heart was bursting and I couldn't stop crying" (in Ayoob, 2003:7).

The centre stands on a slope overlooking Chatsworth and the mural has become a focal point in a public space.

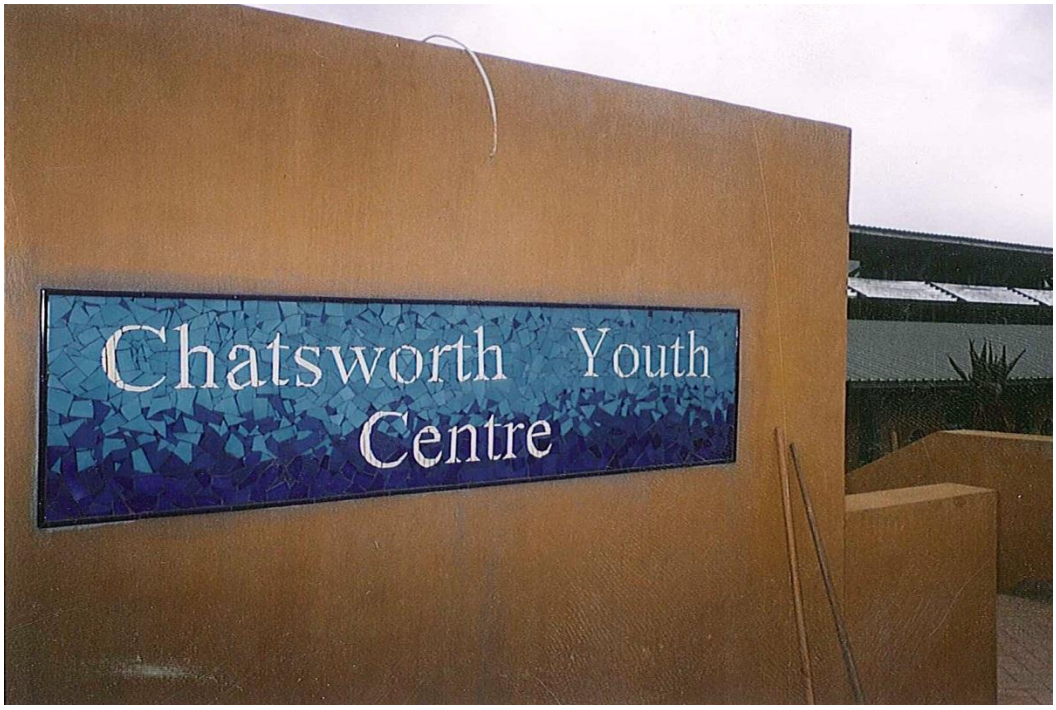

Fig. 101 Raksha Padaruth, 2003. **Entrance Wall to the Chatsworth Youth Centre.** 800mm x 3.5m. Mosaic tiles. Chatsworth. Durban.

Fig. 102 Raksha Padaruth, 2003. **Memorial Wall.** 6m x 3m. Mosaic tiles. Chatsworth. Durban.

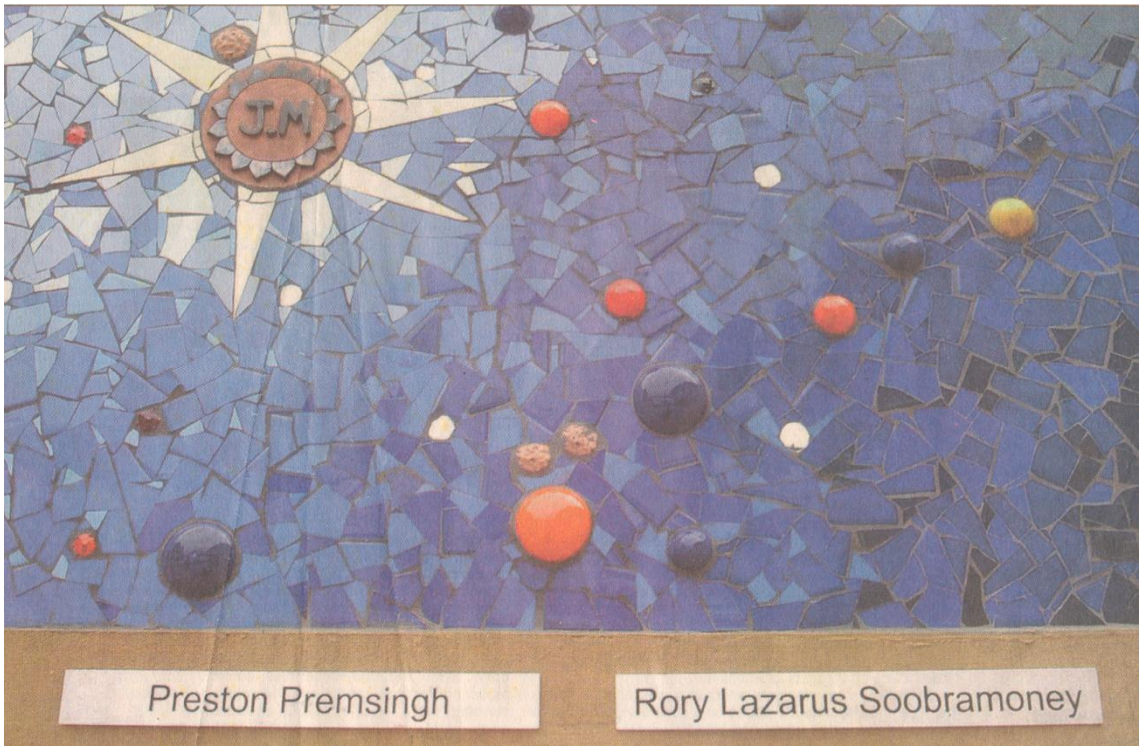

Fig. 103 Raksha Padaruth, 2003. **Detail of Memorial Wall.** Glazed ceramic, mirror and mosaic tiles. Chatsworth. Durban.

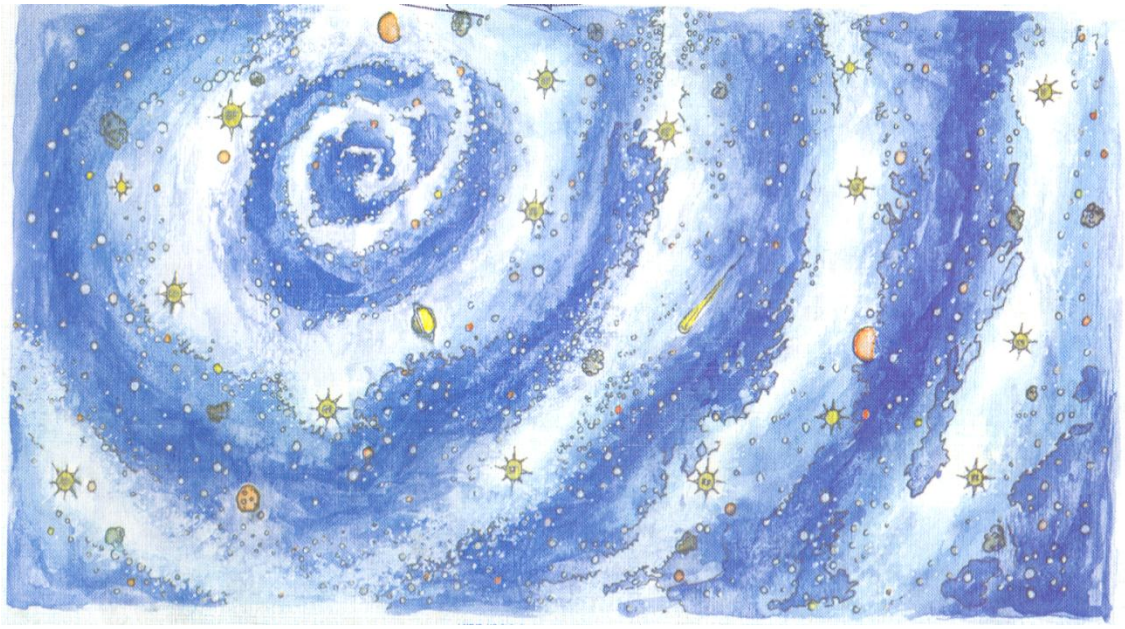

Fig. 104 Raksha Padaruth, 2003. **Watercolour drawing of Memorial Wall.** Glazed ceramic, mirror and mosaic tiles. Chatsworth. Durban.

4.2 The Youth Entrepreneurship Centre and Construction Incubators (2006)

In 2005 the Ethekwini municipality launched a project to help emerging contractors in the building and civil engineering construction industry become active participants in the city's economy. This was done by providing support in the tendering and construction phases and developing their entrepreneurial and business management skills. The *Thuthukani* building in Alice Street was renovated to accommodate the emerging contractors incubator and a youth entrepreneurship centre.

When the building was close to completion, a tender was advertised for artworks to furbish the centre. As I had registered a company, Truarts Studio, a few months prior to this I was able to submit a proposal for mosaic murals. The proposal was accepted and the three murals took three months to complete.

The client, the Ethekwini Municipality, wanted the artworks to relate to the youth and the City of Durban. As part of the tender, it was mandatory for young people to participate in the execution of the commission. My primary concern was to make the youth aware of the unique aesthetics within their culture, thus creating an appreciation of who they are, and where they originally came from, in order to become rooted future role models.

My designs borrowed extensively from African and Indian traditional dress motifs. These designs were chosen specifically because of the strong African and Indian culture present in and around the centre, including Warwick Junction and Victoria Market. I worked closely with visual art students from the Bartels Arts Trust, mentoring and training them in ceramic and mosaic techniques.

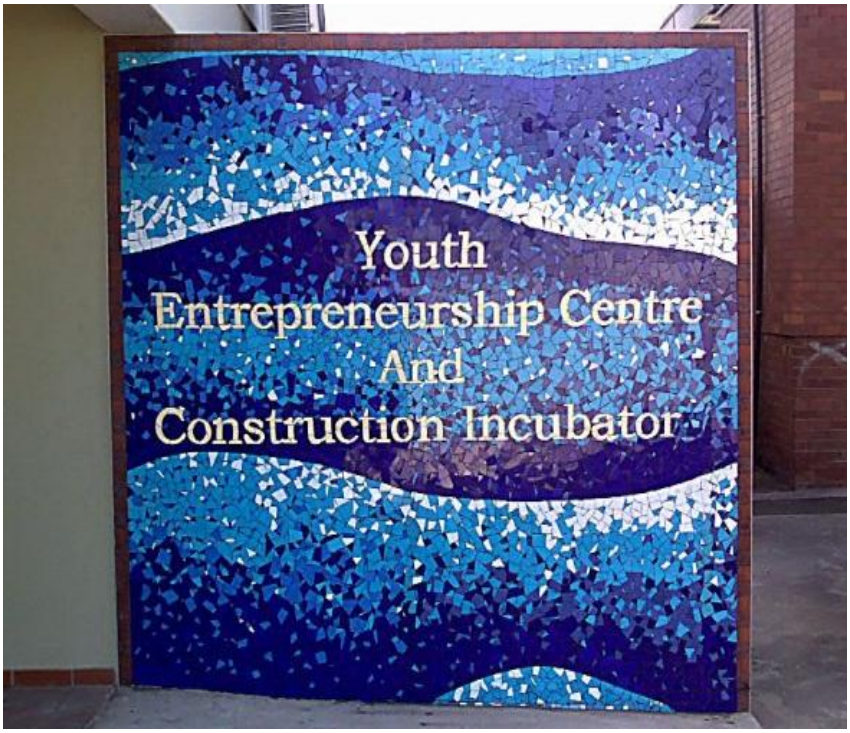

Fig. 105 Raksha Padaruth, 2006. **Entrance wall.** The Youth Entrepreneurship Centre and Construction Incubators. Handmade ceramic and mosaic tiles. Alice Street. Durban.

Fig. 106 Raksha Padaruth, 2006. **Detail of the entrance wall.** Handmade ceramic and mosaic tiles. Youth Entrepreneurship Centre and Construction Incubators, Alice Street. Durban.

Images of Zulu headdresses (Fig. 108), *amasumpa*[10] (Fig. 109), Indian paisley motifs (Fig. 110) and traditional Zulu triangle designs (Fig. 111) found on traditional Zulu pots, dominate the three walls. These motifs were handcrafted using earthenware and terracotta clay. Each piece was either stone-fired or glazed, working with a deep red, orange, green, and ochre palette. The colours were consciously bold and vibrant to create an energised youthful atmosphere, while referencing different cultures. One of Durban's major attractions, the sea, forms a link between all three walls.

The entrance wall (Fig. 105), measuring 3m x 4m, serves as a geographic reference, where the viewer is greeted with a sign directing them to their destination. Handcrafted and stone-fired terracotta clay tiles (Fig. 106) were created to form a border around this wall. The tiles are stamped with motifs and symbols representing Zulu and Indian cultures.

The main wall (Fig. 107) in the courtyard, measuring 10m x 4m, signifies a youthful presence through the use of silhouettes of urban youth filled with decorative patterns and traditional cultural motifs. This wall ends at the mezzanine level and can therefore be seen from above, creating a visually bold statement.

On the external wall (Fig. 112), an image of the sea is abstracted to form a decorative pattern of colour containing line drawings of a young man and woman. This wall measuring, 2m x 4m, is located close to Warwick Road and acts as an attraction to the passer-by.

The design for the mosaic murals were drawn on asbestos sheets. The tile pieces were then glued on the sheets. This was done in manageable sections and was completed in the studio (Fig. 113). These asbestos sheets were then transported to site and installed on the respective walls (Fig. 114). The project when completed added an aesthetic appeal and vibrance to the architecture. The architects indicated verbally that they were extremely pleased with the outcome.

10 *Amasumpa* translates directly as warts, a word that emphasises the anthropomorphic connotations of the small protuberances found on traditional Zulu ware (Bell and Calder, 1998).

Fig. 107 Raksha Padaruth, 2006. **Main wall.** 4m x 10m. The Youth Entrepreneurship Centre and Construction Incubators. Ceramic and mosaic tiles. Alice Street. Durban.

Fig. 108 Raksha Padaruth, 2006. **Zulu headdress.** The Youth Entrepreneurship Centre and Construction Incubators. Ceramic and mosaic tiles. Alice Street. Durban.

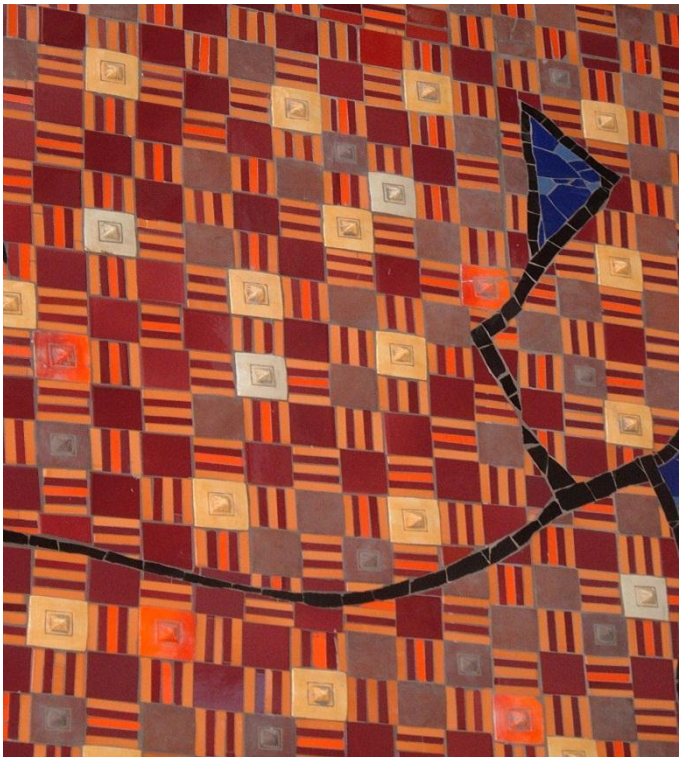

Fig. 109 Raksha Padaruth, 2006. ***Amasumpa*.** The Youth Entrepreneurship Centre and Construction Incubators. Ceramic and mosaic tiles. Alice Street. Durban.

Fig. 110 Raksha Padaruth, 2006. **Paisley design.** The Youth Entrepreneurship Centre and Construction Incubators. Ceramic and mosaic tiles. Alice Street. Durban.

Fig. 111 Raksha Padaruth, 2006. **Traditional Zulu triangle designs.** The Youth Entrepreneurship Centre and Construction Incubators. Ceramic and mosaic tiles. Alice Street. Durban.

Fig. 112 Raksha Padaruth, 2006. **External wall.** The Youth Entrepreneurship Centre and Construction Incubators. Ceramic and mosaic tiles. Alice Street. Durban.

Fig. 113 Raksha Padaruth, 2006. **Mosaic being laid out in the studio.** The Youth Entrepreneurship Centre and Construction Incubators. Mosaic tiles. Alice Street. Durban.

Fig. 114 Raksha Padaruth, 2006. **Installation of the asbestos panels.** The Youth Entrepreneurship Centre and Construction Incubators. Ceramic and mosaic tiles. Alice Street. Durban.

CHAPTER FOUR: SECTION TWO

'PASSAGE'

AN EXHIBITION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE MASTERS DEGREE IN FINE ART.

My practical component is in the form of an exhibition titled '*PASSAGE'* that speaks to the construction of my identity, as a South African of Indian origin in the context of a local, contemporary, South African reality, since we are the product of the time and place in which we live. The title references both the passage of my ancestors from India to South Africa and the passage of time in the construction of my identity. It is important to propose a definition of identity and culture for the purpose of this dissertation, as well as explain the background within which my work exists. For the purpose of this research "culture is not regarded as something with which one is born, but as being learned…it is therefore important that you do not think of culture as being static. Rather it is dynamic, being subtly or radically transformed or changed over time by the actions of people" (Craig et al, 1994:56). Similarly, identities of individuals and groups are not simple, static definitions. They are, like the people they represent, complex, multifaceted, flexible, and not predetermined. All human identities have their origins in biological and cultural conceptions. They are formulated in relation to the identities of others. They are formed in response to changing economic, political and cultural conditions (Boram-Hays, 1997:38). These definitions are relevant to my upbringing in a multi-cultural environment.

I am a Hindu female of Indian origin. My great great paternal grandfather, Kalloo Muckun, arrived in South Africa in 1878 from Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh, India. He was employed by the Virginia Sugar Estate. I am a fifth generation South African, born in Estcourt, in the Kwa-Zulu Natal Midlands, where growing up I experienced a mix of Indian, European and Zulu cultures. I was raised by a Zulu-speaking nanny, whilst being taught to follow the principles of a practicing Hindu. I went to M.L. Sultan Primary School and Drakensberg Secondary School which were Indian only schools. I moved to Durban in 1998 to pursue my studies in Fine Art. At the onset of my Masters programme in Fine Art, I married into a Hindu home and in 2011 I gave birth to my first child. This brought with it the responsibilities of family, being a wife and a mother. It is this journey that is explored in my work.

This installation is the result of three years of experimentation with the use of mosaics and tiles as an aesthetic element. This process began with the collection of old doors. The use of the door as an architectural element suggests the idea of entering or exiting evoking emotions and a sense of new beginnings, taking on the role of a wife and recently the role of a mother, all of which are highlighted in my work.

Old doors were used because of the history that they embody. This was especially true of two doors which came from my grandmother's house. The use of wooden doors in the construction process references the construction of my identity.

Each door embodies my experiences and manifests my identity as a female South African of Indian origin. The tile installation beneath each door creates a literal and symbolic entry point.

4.3 Goddess (2012)

The work titled **Goddess** (Fig. 115) refers to a female deity. Here, the female goddess is associated with independence, motherhood, love, and the household. These attributes are associated with the different roles played in my daily life. The images for the clay figures were sourced from literature on Indian art and sculpted using terracotta clay, earthenware fired and imbedded in the recessed, rectangular areas within the door (Fig. 116). On reflection, these figures reference the rich tradition of ceramic sculpture and carvings in KwaZulu Natal by artists such as Mary Stainbank. Each recessed area is mosaicked using handcrafted earthenware tiles. Each tile was made using thin, rolled out sheets of clay that were embossed with Indian patterns and motifs, glazed and smoke-fired. The tiles were then cut and used as mosaic elements. The moulded mandalas refer to the lotus flower (Fig. 116), a type of water lily that grows in murky waters. Hinduism believes that man is rooted in materialism, but with faith in the divine he can emerge pure and enlightened, just like the lotus flower (Lotus flower Online, 2012). The moulded architectural elements (Fig. 117) on the top and bottom panels reinforce

Fig. 115 Raksha Padaruth, 2009. ***Goddess***. 2m x 700mm. Ceramic and mosaic on wood.

Fig. 116 Raksha Padaruth, 2009. **Clay Figure and moulded mandala**. Ceramic and mosaic on wood.

Fig.117 Raksha Padaruth. 2009. **Moulded architectural elements**. Ceramic and mosaic on wood.

Fig. 118 Raksha Padaruth. 2009. **Floor panel 1**. 750mmx750mm. Glazed ceramic.

the Indian cultural context of the door. These clay elements were made using terracotta clay, red iron oxide and gold lustre glaze. Moulded *amasumpa* forms (Fig. 117) have been used as a border, surrounding the recessed areas of the door. They reference the Zulu presence in my identity. The floor panel (Fig. 118) that relates to this door comprises of twenty one tiles. Handmade, stoneware *amasumpa* forms are arranged on individual tiles to re-create patterns found in Zulu beadwork; symbols of the lotus flower are echoed in fired stoneware and glazed clay.

4.4 Refuge (2012)

The door titled **Refuge** (Fig. 119) emphasises my personal fears of living in a country with a high crime rate. The door symbolically takes on the role of being an element of safety and protection. Individually moulded spikes of various lengths are clustered together (Fig. 120) to form a barrier. The spikes were made with a mixture of earthenware clays, smoke-fired and set in 'material one'. The arabesque shape references burglar guards and North African ironwork.

The floor panel relating to **Refuge** (Fig. 121) comprises of twenty four smoke-fired tiles covered with chicken wire. The chicken wire makes reference to a protective enclosure.

4.5 Shaadi (2009)

The work titled **Shaadi** (Fig. 122), explores the symbolism of my Hindu wedding. *Shaadi* is a Hindi term meaning wedding. The door in this work is covered with a sari, traditionally worn as a wedding dress by Indian women. Embroidered on the sari is an image in the shape of a garland.

In a Hindu wedding, the exchange of garlands is a gesture of acceptance of one another. Within the garland are embroidered portraits of myself and my husband (Fig. 123), images of the *mendhi* design applied on my hand (Fig. 123) on the night before the wedding and handmade ceramic elements (Fig. 124). The *Mendhi* ceremony is an important ritual and usually takes place one or two days before the wedding. The colour of the *mendhi* is the traditional Hindu colour of auspiciousness, joy and celebration.

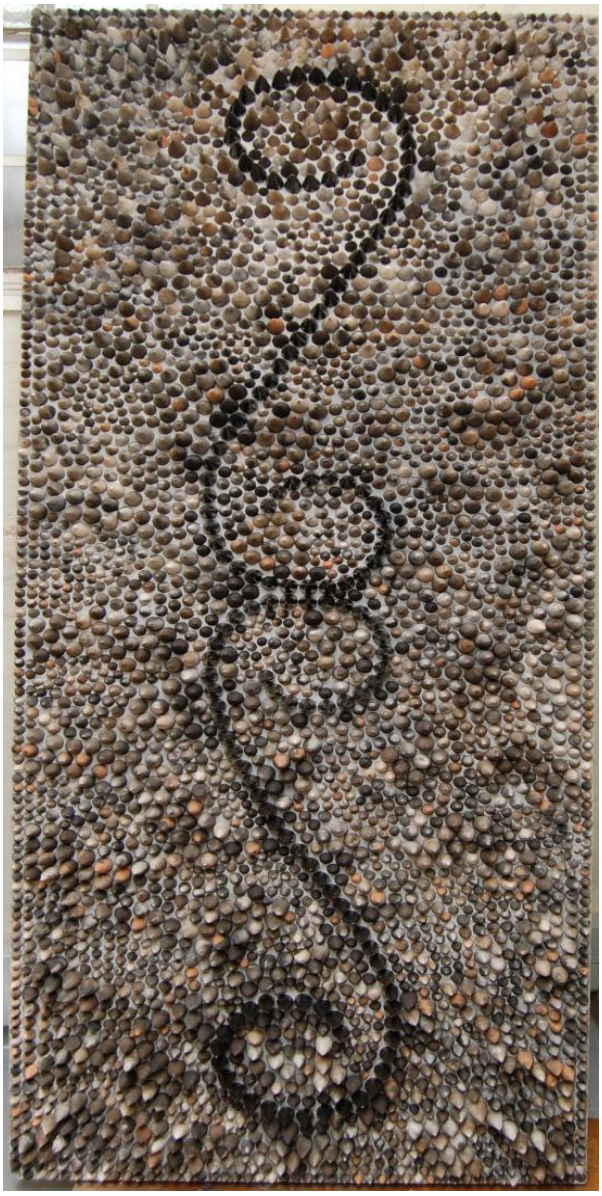

Fig. 119 Raksha Padaruth. 2010. **Refuge**. 2300mmx800mmx100mm. Ceramic on wood.

Fig. 120 Raksha Padaruth. 2010. **Detail of Refuge**. Ceramic on wood.

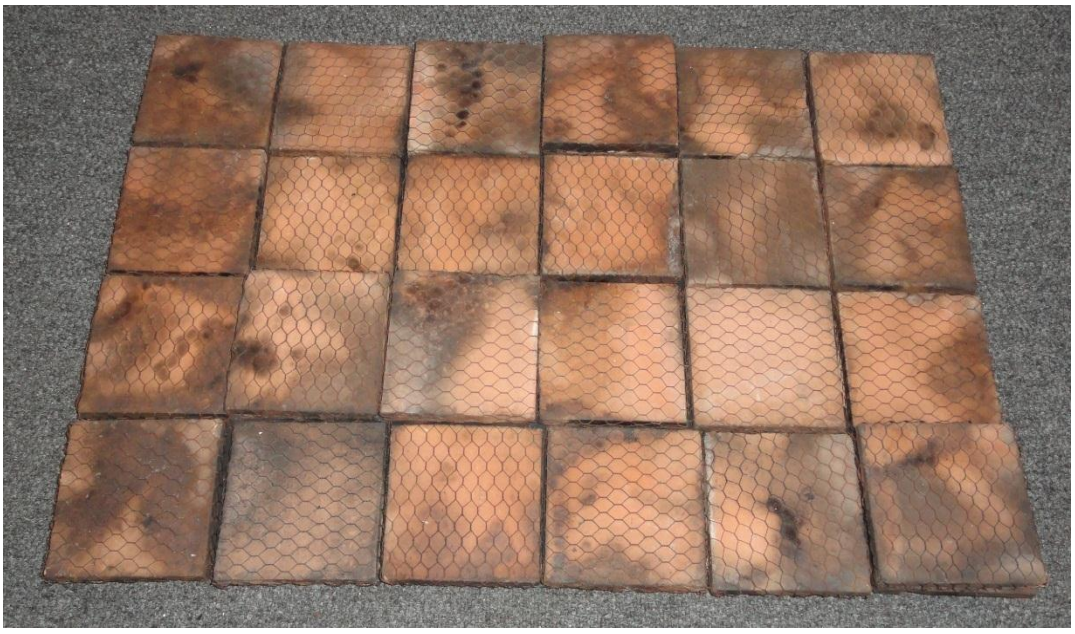

Fig. 121 Raksha Padaruth. 2010. **Floor panel 2**. 900mmx900mm. Chicken-wire on ceramic tiles.

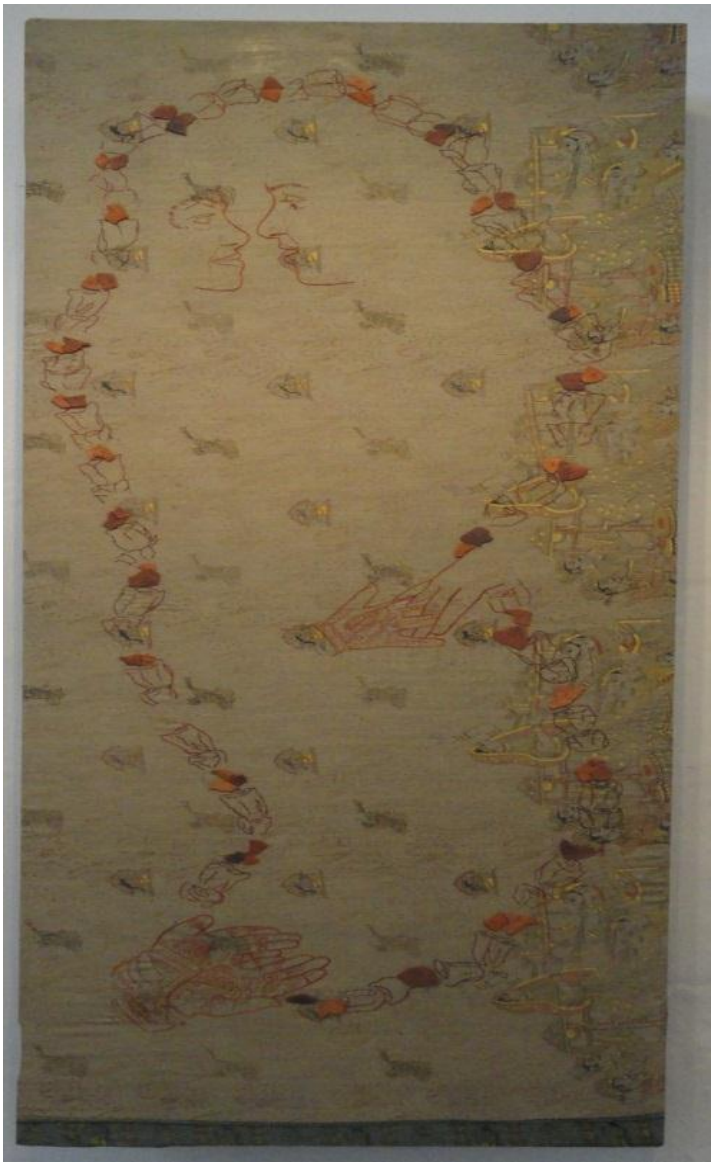

Fig. 122 Raksha Padaruth, 2009. **Shaadi**. 2300mmx750mmx45mm. Ceramic, embroidery and sari on wood.

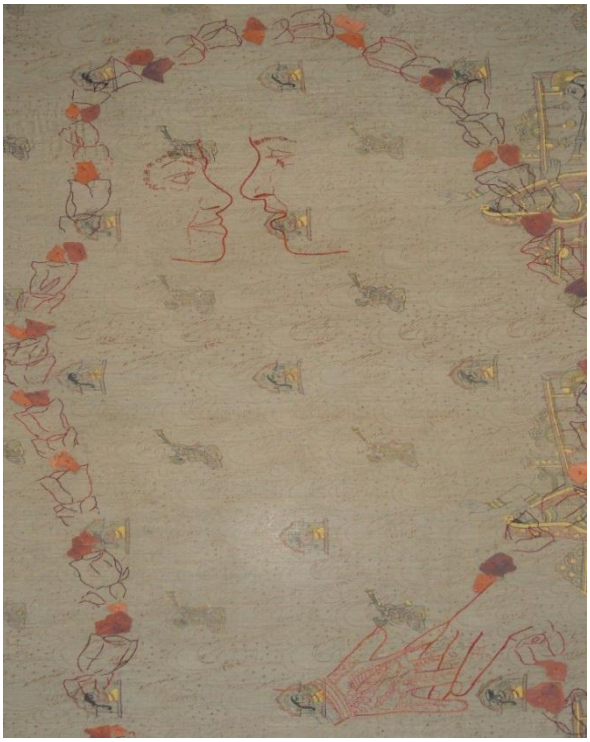

Fig. 123 Raksha Padaruth, 2009. **Detail of Shaadi**. Ceramic, embroidery and sari on wood.

Fig. 124 Raksha Padaruth. 2009. **Handmade ceramic elements**. Ceramic, embroidery and sari on wood.

The floor panel that relates to **Shaadi** (Fig. 125) consists of eight ceramic tiles. Some of the tiles are covered with sari material and contain small elements of embroidery and handmade ceramic elements that echo the door. Two tiles are painted with an earthenware glaze and consist of relief representations of a contemporary female in traditional attire (Fig. 126). The remaining ceramic tiles comprise of a variety of textures, glazed and fired to stoneware temperature.

4.6 Transit (2012)

The work titled **Transit** (Fig. 127) is a symbolic recollection of my personal journey through the connection of the copper wire to the nails. This door was from my grandmother's house where I resided during my first two years of study and embodies many personal memories. The repeated circular ceramic symbol embedded in the frame of the door (Fig. 128) is made with terracotta clay and painted with red iron oxide. In Hinduism this circular shape symbolises the "*Kalachakra* or Wheel of Time, which is the symbol of perfect creation of the cycles of existence, where time and space are interwoven" (*Kalachakra* or Wheel of Time, 2013).

The floor panel (Fig. 129) that forms a part of **Transit** comprises of five ceramic tiles within a recessed and carved wooden frame. The images (Fig. 130) make reference to the importance of my family and spirituality during my personal journey. The tiles were glazed, fired to earthenware temperature, and smoke-fired.

Fig. 125 Raksha Padaruth. 2009. **Floor panel 3**. 360mmx720mm. Ceramic, embroidery and sari.

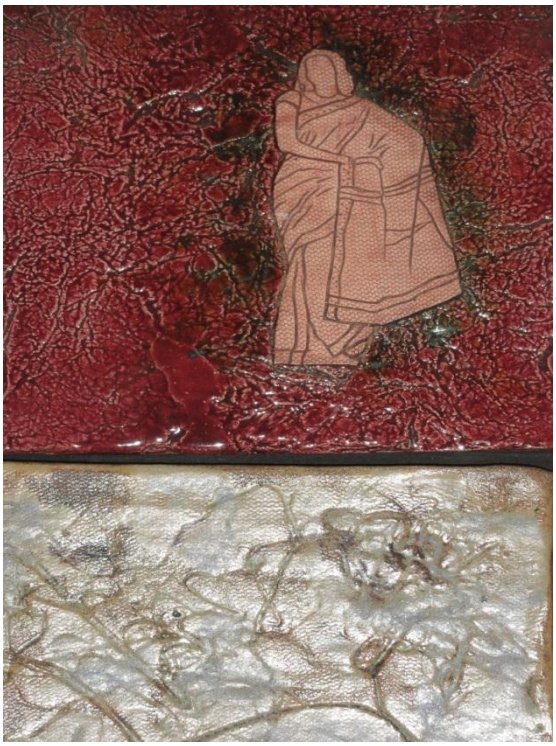

Fig. 126 Raksha Padaruth. 2009. **Detail of floor panel 3**. Ceramic, embroidery and sari on wood.

Fig. 127 Raksha Padaruth. 2012. **Transit.** 2080mmx920mmx70mm. Ceramic, nails and copper-wire on wood.

Fig. 128 Raksha Padaruth. 2012. **Detail of Transit.** Ceramic, nails and copper-wire on wood.

Fig. 129 Raksha Padaruth. 2012. **Floor panel 4.** 890mmx270mm. Ceramic tiles on wood.

Fig. 130 Raksha Padaruth. 2012. **Detail of Floor panel 4.** Ceramic tiles on wood.

4.7 Conception (2012)

In **Conception (**Fig. 131) I explore the psychological and biological implications of pregnancy. The plates (Fig. 132) are handmade with porcelain clay and painted with a transparent glaze. The hexagonal shapes on the plates symbolise cells and the process of cell division during pregnancy. The plates are contrasted with a mosaic of tonally varied knitted string that represents the female; carved Indian paisley motifs provide a decorative border to the door. The carved door frame provides a reference to east African architecture.

The floor panel relating to **Conception** (Fig. 133) comprises of handmade porcelain tiles, transparent glazed, fired to earthenware temperature and smoke-fired. These tiles are embossed with relief Indian motifs and broken to create a mosaic that is recessed within a wooden structure. This wooden structure, in its semi-circular form, echoes the shape of the circular shape of the porcelain plates on the door, as well as the carved paisley design on the border of the door.

4.8 Commercial Deity (2009)

The door titled **Commercial Deity** (Fig. 134) was sourced from my grandmother's house and explores the commercialisation of the Hindu religion and the negative impact that modernity and globalisation have had on religion and spirituality. Found calendar prints were used to create a collage in the recessed areas of the door. These old and faded prints contain images of religious icons that are mass produced and sold to the Hindu public. As a practicing Hindu, I am against such commercialisation. This artwork speaks of my position in relation to this global phenomenon.

Mass produced items like brass plates, ceramic casts of the deity Ganesha, and plastic idols of various deities were attached within this collage (Fig. 135). The plastic deities were mounted on ceramic plates which had been decorated with underglazes and different colour lustres, in an attempt to provide each idol with a unique appearance; thus subverting their mass produced anonymity.

Fig. 131 Raksha Padaruth. 2012. **Conception**. 2130mm x 680mm x 40mm. Ceramic and knitted string on wood.

Fig. 132 Raksha Padaruth. 2012. **Detail of Conception**. Ceramic and knitted string on wood.

Fig. 133 Raksha Padaruth. 2012. **Floor panel 5**. 700mmx450mm. Ceramic mosaic on wood.

Fig. 134 Raksha Padaruth. 2009.**Commercialised Deity.** 2000mm x 800mm x 40mm. Ceramic, metal, plastic and collage on wood.

A variety of brass deities were attached to the edge of the door, mounted on rusty, metal disks that create a contrast. Self-adhesive *bindis*[11] made of felt, or thin metal, form a continuous link around the door. The door is stained with bright colours associated with Indian culture.

The floor panel that relates to **Commercial Deity** (Fig. 136) comprises of sixty ceramic tiles. The surrounding twenty eight tiles were handmade terracotta tiles fired to earthenware temperature and painted with a red iron oxide. These tiles make reference to memories of time spent with family represented by line drawings in the clay (Fig. 137). The tiles within this border comprise of earthenware clay with a transparent glaze. The decorative pattern was carved into the clay before firing and painted with copper oxide. Glass beads used in traditional Zulu beadwork were placed in the recessed areas of the carved pattern and fired to earthenware temperature. These tiles were then smoke-fired.

4.9 Cocoon

The work titled **Cocoon** (Fig. 138) symbolises my concerns and emotions relating to motherhood in the form of a porcelain womb-like structure that has been ruptured (Fig. 139). The image refers to motherhood, an experience that brings with it a strong sense of responsibility and the need to nurture. However, one realises that such attachments need to be released in order to find a balance in life. This process of detachment has been a very difficult one.

The floor panel that relates to **Cocoon** (Fig. 140) comprises of twenty five tiles. Handmade ceramic elements textured with Indian motifs embellish the tiles on the edge of this panel. These handmade ceramic elements were made and glazed with stoneware clay. In the centre of this tile panel lies a coiled earthenware glazed pot. This tile panel makes reference to a shrine or alter.

11. A *bindi*, from Sanskrit *bindu*, meaning "a drop, small particle, dot", is a forehead decoration worn in South Asia (particularly India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Mauritius).[1] and Southeast Asia (Wikipedia, 2012).

Fig. 135 Raksha Padaruth. 2009. **Detail of Commercial Deity**. Ceramic, metal, plastic and collage on wood.

Fig. 136 Raksha Padaruth. 2011. **Floor panel 6.** 120mmx60mm. Ceramic tiles.

Fig. 137 Raksha Padaruth. 2009. **Detail of floor panel 6**. Ceramic tiles.

Fig. 138 Raksha Padaruth. 2012. **Cocoon**. 1100mm x 400mm. Ceramic on wood.

Fig. 139 Raksha Padaruth. 2012. Detail of **Cocoon**. Ceramic on wood.

Fig. 140 Raksha Padaruth. 2012. **Floor panel 7**. 600mm x 540mm. Ceramic vessel on tiles.

Prior to embarking on this journey, integrity and authenticity were absent in my work as a ceramicist and I found it difficult to express my identity in my work. This period of reflection has taught me to rely on my intuition and to trust the creative process in the production of a body of work through which I have explored my personal identity. The work reflects my engagement with experimentation in the use of tile and mosaic elements, combined with wood, fabric, string and wire, to construct a conceptual and visual mapping of my growth as an Indian female in KwaZulu Natal.

In addition, my commercial work provides evidence of my ability to register a company, employ people, empower students and manage each project successfully. I can now confidently liaise with clients in meeting a brief and delegate work accordingly. I have technically mastered the methods of large-scale mosaic production, while successfully contributing to the aesthetic adornment of Durban public spaces in a unique way through my cultural hybridity.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation set out to investigate the use of ceramics as an aesthetic architectural element in Durban by James Hall (1916-2006), Andrew Walford (b.1942) and Jane du Rand (b.1969) from 1963 to 2012 and in my work from 2006. These artists were selected because their work demonstrated a wide range of the use of decorative tiles and mosaics as aesthetic elements in Durban architecture over a period of more than fifty years.

Research has revealed that the use of ceramics as an aesthetic element in architecture can be dated as far back as 1400 B.C in the Near East (Hamilton, 1978:10). Researching the historical use of tiles and mosaics in architecture has highlighted the importance of the use of ceramic elements in relation to architecture that persists as a contemporary practice in Durban.

However, the methods and techniques of tiled mosaic production have evolved over time in order to promote efficiency. The development of technology such as new adhesives, for example Epoxy, has influenced the expanding function of mosaic art. Improved building materials, particularly preformed panels such as asbestos sheets, provide a faster method for the installation of large-scale mosaics. The traditionally used direct method has now been substituted for the faster in-direct method, while twentieth century subject matter has changed from religious to contemporary narrative.

These developments are evident in the work of Hall, Walford and du Rand, whom have contributed extensively to the use of ceramics as an aesthetic element in Durban architecture. Research into the historical and contemporary use of ceramics as an aesthetic architectural element in Durban has highlighted a strong European design influence, combined with indigenous content. The European design influence was a result of the European training of the artists and designers involved in the creation of the artworks, while the indigenous content was the result of a variety of South African cultural influences. The influence of European design is evident in the **Cenotaph** (1920) (Fig. 30) created in the Art Deco style. A combination of European design (Art Noveau) and local content (a view of Durban Bay) is evident in **The Gate Retiring Rooms** (1914) (Fig. 22). This combination of European design and local subject matter is also evident in the work of James Hall, especially in the form of the modernist abstraction and images of indigenous food that appears in the **Union Refectory**

Counters at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College. (1962) (Fig. 50).

The use of abstraction in the work of Andrew Walford in the **Old Mutual Building** (n.d) (Fig. 58) and ***Isikothi*** (Albert Luthuli International Conference Centre) (1994) (Fig. 70) is combined with the inclusion of a reference to Zulu and Indian imagery, together with local subject matter. Jane du Rand, in the commissions for the Inkosi Albert Luthuli Conference Centre titled **Red Carpet** (2008) (Fig. 75) and the **K-RITH Building** (2012) (Figs. 79-100), references the simplification of form evident in Art Noveau. However, this European design influence is combined with a strong reference to Indian and African fabric and plants used in traditional Zulu healing.

A combination of abstraction and reference to Indian and Zulu culture is evident in commissions undertaken by me, especially the Youth Entrepreneurship Centre and Construction Incubators (2006), in the form of paisley designs, the Zulu headdress and *amasumpa's* (Figs. 107-114).

Arising from this research, it is evident that there is a need for further research into the establishment of formal training programs, to provide local youth with the necessary skills for their involvement in commissions using ceramics as an aesthetic architectural element.

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INKOSI ALBERT LUTHULI INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE

What was the brief given by the architect?
It was an original ICC building with this being an add-on part of the ICC. What they were concerned about was that in the original design, the entrance was very unwelcoming. They felt that the way the entrance was designed was reserved for dignitaries and it wasn't an accessible entrance for members of the public so they especially wanted to make this side of the entrance welcoming, and accessible. They had an idea of creating a red carpet from the street up the stairs to the entrance of the building. That was the brief given to people who put forward proposals.

What was the process of design development for the mosaic undertaken?
They zoned out an area of the floor where they thought the red carpet could go. So in order to come up with the design, I looked at the design of the building. There were a lot of long, rectangular, linear elements. The ceilings of the building were a feature element in the architects' design which had a huge open space. So I thought it would be nice to pick up on the long rectangular elements and use that to create a series of steps into the building. I wanted to create a feeling of progression so that when you walked from the street into the building, you are progressing along a series of different experiences with the colour and texture of the floor. That was how the design concept came about. I would use different materials and different ranges of reds and oranges to create that experience.

Briefly explain the composition and the significance of the elements used within the design?
I tried to base the patterns and designs used on a contemporary, very African feel so I took patterns and shapes from African design and traditional Indian design and gave them a more contemporary look. The designs referenced African and Indian fabrics, like sari and *tshweshwe* designs. The elements in the design of each strip that made up the red carpet were a mix of pebbles and ceramic, mosaics so I tried to get different textures and experiences. I was trying to link it back to being earthy and African and relevant to being in Durban. Each strip was seen as its own little composition and together they made up one whole carpet.

As an architect, how in your opinion do the ceramic elements contribute to the aesthetics of the architecture?
I always think it does. I think it did create a nice pathway. The work goes up the stairs so it does give one direction. There is a huge paved area in front of the building within which the ceramic carpet would help people to enter the building, creating a pathway and direction in which to walk.

What are the total dimensions of the work?
It was roughly 60 square meters with strips of different length. Each strip was deliberately made different lengths from about 800mm long to 2 meters long. They were all the same width which tied in with the paving which was about 450mm.

What are the different techniques used in the manufacture of the artwork?
We used a lot of ceramic pieces that we made and fired to stoneware temperature so that they were hard wearing. We made little square and round ceramic holders and frames within which we placed mosaic. We also used pebbles and old bricks that we found at the beach. The bulk of the work were ceramic tiles.

What clay did you use and why?
We used stoneware clay because we wanted it to be hard and durable. The tiles used were floor tiles that are more durable to be walked on.

What tiles did you use and why?
Glass tiles were used inside the ceramic frames because they are generally thinner than floor tiles and it was important to keep the mosaic on a level plane. We had asked for a certain thickness on the slab for the pebble casts so we had to fill up with a screed so that at times we had 2mm. Pebble casts were made in the studio and installed on site.

When was the artwork for the ICC completed?
In 2008.

How long did this project take?
Four months.

How did you go about glazing the clay pieces and what glazes were used?
We mostly used underglaze with stoneware transparent and were fired to 1200 degrees celsius due to the hardwearing aspect and it is susceptible to damage.

Why did you choose an abstract composition?
Because it was a red carpet and I didn't think that any kind of representational artwork would have worked. I wanted each strip to be different but work together as a whole as a fabric or a carpet and read as one piece.

Who were the architects involved in the project and were they pleased with the outcome?
The main architects were ZAI Architects whom were pleased with the outcome.

Would you say there is any change or increase in the use of ceramic architectural adornment over the years?
There is an increase in the use of ceramic architectural adornment since we have had an increase in projects. It is an accessible medium and a lot of people tend to identify and relate to it. It is a successful way of including artworks into architecture. It is more durable than a painted mural. The Durban city architects are looking for more ways to include artworks into the building.

What were some of the challenges experienced during the project?
We worked specifically to the size of the paver and in some instances the contractor had cut the size of the paver, so we had to cut our pavers to fit. We were told we had a certain depth to work towards and certain areas on the slab were too high so we had to discard a lot of them and remake them. This led to an argument but was eventually resolved.

MOSAIC PANELS ON THE K-RITH BUILDING, NELSON R MANDELA SCHOOL OF MEDICINE (2012)
It's the University of KwaZulu Natal and the medical school building on Umbilo road. The project was funded by America. The building is called the K-RITH and deals with research into Tuberculosis and HIV. The project on the front façade of the car garage was completed last year. The project to be installed this year was in various floor and wall areas in and around the building that tied in with the mosaic on the façade of the car garage. The mosaic on the façade of the car garage was 11m x 7m which was broken up into panels. All designs were based on the concept of cells and viruses.

What was the brief given by the architect?
It was mandatory to include unskilled people living with HIV in executing the mosaic so I broke up the mosaic into smaller manageable square panels.

Briefly explain the composition and the significance of the elements used within the design?
The rectangular mural on the front façade of the K-RITH building is 12mx2m and references cells, viruses and plant fractals. On the inside of the building is a mosaic that references the DNA strip. This comprises of round discs on the wall that resemble the double helix. The large curved wall outside leads people to the entrance of the building which will comprise of round mosaic discs that reference medicinal plants. The other side of this wall that faces the inside of the building, also references medicinal plants but in a continuous strip. At the reception area which is at the entrance of the building, we are installing a large round mosaic floor which is 6m in diameter. There are a number of mosaic strips that lead off from this large round mosaic. The design concept here deals with healing mandalas. A lot of the indigenous healing plants lead back to African medicine while the healing mandalas are more of an Eastern reference. I tried to link shapes like circular forms and plant images throughout the building.

How did you incorporate the design into the space?
The mosaic on the outside wall is designed to lead you into the building. The mosaic discs get closer together, as one gets closer to the entrance of the building. The large round mosaic in the building has strips that lead one to different locations inside. The DNA strip in the stairwell leads one up the staircase. The mosaic on the front façade of the building as well as the mosaic on the garage wall is a way of dealing with large expanses of concrete. The mosaic on the inside of the garden wall aims to

create a relaxed environment.

As an architect, how in your opinion do the ceramic elements contribute to the aesthetics of the architecture?
The architecture is quite a contemporary one so instead of using architectural elements we used the flow of people as a design element.

What are the total dimensions of the work?
The circular discs on the outside wall range from 1.5m to 700mm in diameter. The entire wall is 32m long.

What are the different techniques used in the manufacture of the artwork?
Handmade ceramic elements were used in all mosaic panels. The ceramic discs that were made for the floor insert were stone fired.

What clay did you use and why?
We used earthenware and stoneware clay.

What tiles did you use and why?
We used a range of different handmade ceramic tiles especially in creating the names of the plants in the discs on the outside wall.

Who were the architects involved in the project and were they pleased with the outcome?
When we proposed the concept for mosaic on the front façade of the garage wall, the engineers couldn't understand why we chose to use the concept of cells and viruses, when we could've used an image of Nelson Mandela, since it's the Nelson Mandela School of Medicine. However once the mosaic was completed the response was quite positive. It was much easier to then do the next phase of the project. This in a way educated the client.

Walford, A. 2012. Interviewed by R. Padaruth. Walford Studio *N'Shongweni,* 3 February 15.00.

What was the brief given by the architect?
The Old Mutual Group as well as the ICC wanted an artwork that reflected Durban and its people.

What was the process of design development for the tile panels undertaken?
For the tile panel at the Old Mutual Building, the initial drawings were completed by Andrew Verster and then given to me to interpret in clay.
The ICC panel was in keeping with the concept of a traditional Zulu wedding cape, the Isikothi. The colours were in keeping with an African feel. Local people were used to create the beadwork and decoration on smaller tiles with cobalt and red iron oxide.

Briefly explain the composition and the significance of the elements used within the design?
The design elements used in the creation of the tile panel at the Old Mutual building came from Verster's interpretation of Durban.
The tile panel at the ICC building focused on the traditional Zulu wedding cape, the *Isikothi.* Calabash shapes like beer pots were thrown on the wheel and later attached. The smaller tiles painted by the local people included the local fauna and flora found in the *N'Shongweni* area such as birds etc. The horn-like shape found on the jumbo tiles represents the necklace worn by Zulu women.

How in your opinion do the ceramic elements contribute to the aesthetics of the architecture?
The tile panel at the Old Mutual Building is a feature wall at the entrance to the foyer hall that immediately attracts the eye, adding aesthetic interest to the interior of the building.
The tile panels at the ICC is also a feature wall at the bar areas that can be seen and admired from afar. I try as far as possible

What are the total dimensions of each artwork?
The tile panel at the Old Mutual Building measures 430cm x 255cm, while the tile panels at the ICC measure 160mm x 3085mm.

What are the different techniques used in the manufacture of the artwork?
A lot of cut-outs and pressing in different colour clays and scratching in when its leather hard, layering dark stoneware clay. Stamps were made from plaster of paris to emboss the clay. Little porcelain balls were pressed in, or painted with brown slip and glazed with transparent. A Soup ladle was used to trail the chun glaze. This is the first chinese glaze used with wood ash. The tiles are made using stoneware and porcelain clay in a reduction atmosphere. Alot of the techniques are described in my book *A Potter's Tale.*

What clay did you use and why?
The jumbo tiles are made using stoneware clay with an amount of shredded quality paper and twenty percent more grog. The paper adds flexibility to the tile, so that it can be moved safely before firing.

How did you go about glazing the clay pieces and what glazes were used?
The blue lines evident in the Old Mutual tile mural were achieved with a Chun glaze Transparent is white in a reduction atmosphere and is used over slips. Glazes are feldspar n silicone because of the high temperatures at which they are fired.

Would you say there is any change or increase in the use of ceramic architectural adornment over the years?
There is not much of a demand in the use of ceramics as architectural adornment; in fact I would say there is a decline.

What were some of the challenges experienced during the projects?
One of the challenges experienced during the ICC project was when a tile had cracked after being installed, due to a ladder being bolted on in the inspection hatch behind the tile panel. The tile had to be re-made.