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## Z Minnesota State University Mankato

# Around the World on the 44th Parallel

by Joyce Kozloff



## Around the World on the 44th Parallel

### by Joyce Kozloff

In three sets of four panels each, Kozloff depicts cities located near the 44th parallel around the globe. Each four- by seventeen-foot panel is composed of foot-square ceramic tiles applied to the wall surface with an adhesive. The project was commissioned through the Minnesota Percent for Art in Public Places, sponsored by the Minnesota State Arts Board. The work was created at the Tile Guild in Los Angeles and installed in Memorial Library in June 1995.



## NORTH AMERICA

Three of the four cities in North America are university towns. The moist, green forests of the Willamette Valley surround Eugene, Oregon. The panel incorporates motifs that recall thunderbirds and other creatures on ceremonial masks of the Salish Indians. Many layers of sponging help create textures that suggest natural materials such as marble and granite. The detailed map section of Mankato, Minnesota allows local viewers to locate their own streets, "paved" with gold letters. Over 500 circles repeat the motif of two boys fishing before the circles dissolve into leaves at the panel's edge, which incorporates beadwork patterns of Woodland and Plains Indians. The one-inch squares on the Mankato map were cut from earthquake-damaged tile lying in boxes at the Tile Guild, where the panels were produced. Burlington, Vermont reflects the 1960s counterculture, which still lingers there. Sparkly glazes provide a tie-dyed look while butterflies emerge from the surface of the tiles. New England stencil patterns reflect the historic use of such designs before wallpaper was imported. The only large city of the group, Toronto, Canada, features maritime and heraldic imagery. The red, white, and blue city grid reveals its British heritage.

## EUROPE

In Europe, the 44th parallel lies at the southern section of the continent. Nice, France, on the Mediterranean Sea, has art deco waves and a rosy surface that reveals its popularity as a resort city. The entire surface of the panel for Ravenna, Italy is covered with dots in a metallic luster to give a shimmering effect that recalls Ravenna's sixth-century Byzantine churches and glass mosaic artwork. The imagery around the sides of the panel also refers to these churches. The panel for Sarajevo, Bosnia, and Herzegovina depicts the city's history prior to the war of the early 1990s. The patterns would have been found in some of the city's mosques before they were destroyed. Motifs from Iznik tiles and carpets reveal historic ties to the Ottoman Empire. Florence, Italy is crowded with important works of Western art, and Kozloff chose map sections to include the Arno River through the entire panel. Earth tones remind viewers of frescoes while the cherubs recall motifs in famous works of art found in Florence

## ASIA

The final set of panels features cities from northern Asia. Vladivostok, Russia is located at the end of the Trans-Siberian railway, a map of which appears on the right. The section of the city map on the left incorporates designs from Soviet textiles of the 1920s, done in a constructivist style. The panel for Changchun, China, the country's film capital, uses pagodas to indicate the location of film studios. The raised pagodas, as well as carp and bumblebees, were produced using plaster molds then glazed and epoxied to the tiles' surfaces. The modern city of Sapporo, Japan features sections from the transit map. Shards of porcelain ware and motifs of Japanese textiles refer to the city's past while the slick yellow glaze applied by airbrush reveals the high tech present. Urümgi, China lies in the traditionally Muslim region of the country on the old silk route. The panel incorporates imagery from mosque complexes in neighboring Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

Visit Joyce Kozloff's website to view images and read the description of the 44th Parallel. www.joycekozloff.net