

Mix & Match | Mosaic

Advanced Optical Color Mixing and Pattern Practice



Who This Class Is For

This class is intended for mosaic artists with a basic grounding in color theory who want to apply that knowledge more consciously and effectively in their own work.

It is particularly suited for:

- artists who have attended color lectures or classes but find theory difficult to translate into practice
- mosaicists with extensive stocks of smalti, marble, or mixed materials who want clearer strategies for combining them
- practitioners interested in the Spilimbergo approach to color through tesserae
- artists working abstractly or semi-abstractly who want color and andamento to drive composition

This is not an introductory course. It is a practice-based laboratory for artists ready to work with color in a more intentional and personal way.



Concept

Color theory is often well known in principle — primary and complementary colors, hue, saturation, contrast, value, RGB and CMYK — yet its practical implications in mosaic are not always clear.

This class approaches color as a material and perceptual phenomenon, explored through:

- optical mixing
- pattern and andamento rhythms

There are no predefined sketches. Each participant develops up to three individual color concepts and translates them directly into mosaic, guided by perception, material choice, and experimentation rather than by drawing.

The resulting work is not a model to replicate, but a trace of an individual color investigation.



Materials and Format

- Final project on an 8×8 in substrate, prepared in advance by the hosting studio
- The substrate has an intentionally irregular, folded surface, adding spatial and technical complexity
- Participants work with tesserae of varied sizes, shapes, and thicknesses, observing how differences in andamento affect color perception

Note: Working on an irregular surface requires careful attention to layering, leveling, and continuity, so that the mosaic skin responds to the form rather than neutralizing it.



Structure and Preparation

Before the class, participants receive:

- a short series of theoretical video materials for self-study
- brief exercises to refresh key color concepts

This preparation allows class time to focus almost entirely on hands-on work, experimentation, discussion, and individual guidance.

Program Description – 4-Day Format

The 4-day format includes an additional foundational exercise that strengthens color awareness before the final project.

The class begins with a practical color triangle exercise, in which participants:

- construct a triangle based on primary and secondary colors
- create gradual transitions between hues
- practice optical color mixing directly through tesserae placement

This exercise serves as a shared visual and material reference, refreshing theoretical knowledge at exactly the moment it becomes useful.

Building on this, participants move to the final 8×8 in substrate, where they are encouraged to:

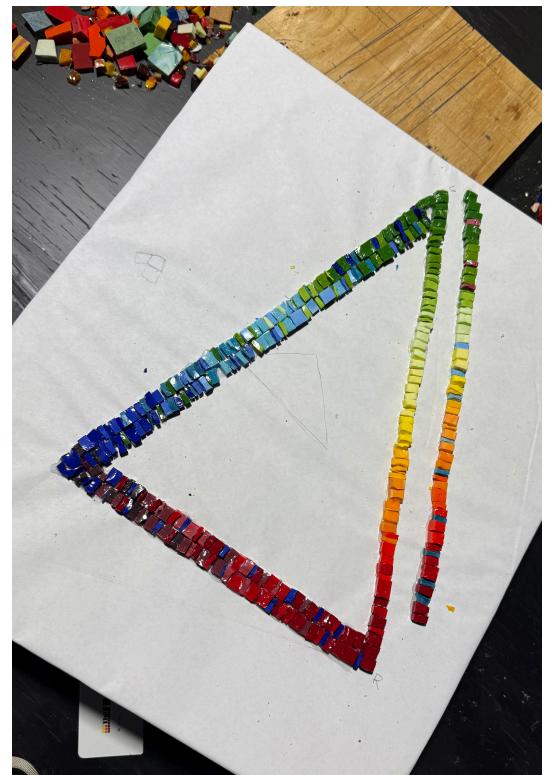
- choose up to three distinct color concepts
- pair them with different pattern logics
- observe how color behavior changes across the irregular surface

The focus is on decision-making, observation, and refinement, rather than on speed or finish.

The instructor provides continuous individual feedback, supported by physical examples brought from Italy that demonstrate how color theory operates in real mosaic conditions and investigates:

- optical mixing through adjacency and fragmentation
- the role of contrast, saturation, and value in mosaic
- how material combinations influence perceived color
- the relationship between pattern logic and color behavior

Participants are encouraged to prepare by looking at examples of optical mixing and textile-like structures in mosaic, in order to arrive with precise questions and a clear experimental intent.



Materials

Participants are encouraged to bring their own smalti or mixed materials when possible. Materials provided by the hosting studio may be used for an additional fee.

