

# Kids Korner

# A Rainbow Footprint Mural

By Craig Hinshaw

Toward the end of the school year Simonds Elementary School has a field day, a fun filled day with activities both in the school and on the school grounds. Classes of students, kindergarten through fifth grade, rotate every 20 minutes from one activity to the next. I directed the following clay activity, which resulted in a colorful, textured tile mural that now hangs in the school.

When a class came to my art activity they were told to take off one of their shoes and inspect the sole for interesting textures and patterns, (most students wore tennis shoes). The students were given a golf-ball-size piece of clay and told to flatten it to about 1/4 inch thick and then press the interesting part of the sole of their shoe into the soft clay. Next, they received a piece of poster board 4 inches square with a 2-inch square cut out of the middle. This frame was laid over the most interesting part of



Student using a cardboard frame to cut out a 2 inch square tile.

the texture and using a pin tool; a 2-inch-square clay tile was cut out. The excess clay was returned to the clay bag to be used by the next class.

Glazing also was completed during the 20 minutes on the still-soft greenware. Each class of students received only two colors to brush on their 2-inch-square tile. I had selected the underglaze colors to correspond with those of the rainbow; red, orange,

yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet. Kindergartners received the first two colors of the rainbow, red and orange; the first grade used orange and yellow; the second grade had yellow and blue, etc.

After the tiles dried, I brushed a clear coat over the top and fired them to Cone 04. The finished tiles were

glued to a 1/2-inch piece of plywood, which was framed with 1-inch wood stripping. Because the tiles were small and heavily textured, I did not grout the tiles.

The finished mural hangs on a wall outside of the school cafeteria. The 288 tiles give students a lot to look at as they stand in line for lunch—but-

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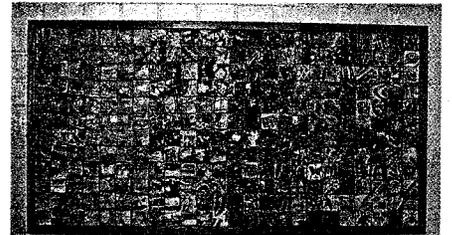


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Student using a small brush to glaze the wet clay tile.

terflies, flowers, bees, cartoon characters and other types of interesting patterns. Usually these images were only seen by the custodian when cleaning those impressions from the floor after students had come in after a rainy day. Now the images are always present in the school, year after year, rain or shine.



The finished mural, 42 inches by 22 inches, fired to Cone 04.



Detail sections of the finished mural.

*Craig Hinshaw is an elementary school art specialist in the Lamphere School District in Madison Heights, MI. He can be reached by e-mail: [craighinshaw@hotmail.com](mailto:craighinshaw@hotmail.com).*

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