

# Through the Looking Glass

Mosaic on a Stick offers a space for the community to turn inward while creating art for all to see **BY KATE SEITZ** PHOTOS BY **KELLI STANKO**



It seems that fortune has been leading Lori Greene and Maria Ricke to mosaics since before they met. The mosaic artists each stumbled onto the ancient art form and when they did, knew they'd finally found their calling. When the two met as part of an Intermedia Arts grant in January 2004, it was like finding a long-lost soul mate. "When Maria mentioned she did mosaics, I gasped," Minnesota native Greene says. Then came the next good fortune, as the two became friends and joked about opening a store to sell mosaic materials. "We had never owned a business before," Ricke says, but the idea sold with the Hamline neighborhood, where the store is located, as well as the bank that approved the loan. In November 2004 the store opened to excited and curious customers.

From the start, the two artists knew their store was bringing together members of the community in a way neither had anticipated. The large space at the southwest corner of Snelling and Thomas avenues is loosely divided into a retail area with materials to build mosaics as well

as finished masterpieces; a work area for Greene and Ricke's own art; tables and instruction area; and another studio space. Art lines the walls during art shows, which take place almost monthly.

While mosaics are the celebrated art form in the shop, the customers are a varied bunch from all corners of the community. Doctors, lawyers, clergy, kids and grandparents fill the classes and open-studio sessions throughout the week. "Our customers are so wonderful," Greene says. Ricke, whose mom visits often and dusts the store, seconds that, adding, "They fill our candy jar; new customers get help from our regulars. This store really is an investment in the community." **SP**

**Mosaic on a Stick.** Hours: Mon.–Wed. 10 a.m.–7 p.m., Thurs. 10 a.m.–9 p.m., Fri.–Sat. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.  
595 N. Snelling Ave. 651.645.6600,  
[www.mosaiconastick.com](http://www.mosaiconastick.com).



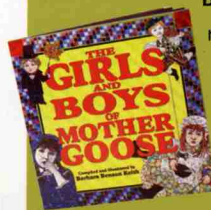
## GOOD TO KNOW

### ART BEAT >>

There are a growing number of mosaic artists in Saint Paul. Creating installations around town, they pop up everywhere, but their names are often unknown to the general public. Emerging from obscurity is



**Barbara Keith**, with a new book called *The Girls and Boys of Mother Goose* (available at [www.brownianbee.com](http://www.brownianbee.com)), illustrated with her



mosaics. To see examples of her work now, visit Gallery 360 in Minneapolis, where her nursery rhyme mosaics will be on display through May. —KS

*Do you have or know of a unique Saint Paul space? Contact the editor at [editor@stpaulillustrated.com](mailto:editor@stpaulillustrated.com), and we might feature it on the pages of Saint Paul Illustrated.*

## TO DO

**MAKE YOUR OWN** work of art by taking a class at Mosaic on a Stick. Starting April 19 and running each Thursday for four weeks from 7 to 9 p.m., store owners Lori Greene and Maria Ricke will teach beginner and intermediate mosaic students how to turn their trash into treasured mosaics. For \$99, the class includes instruction, a studio pass and use of the studio's tools. To sign up or for more information, call 651.645.6600 or visit [www.mosaiconastick.com](http://www.mosaiconastick.com).