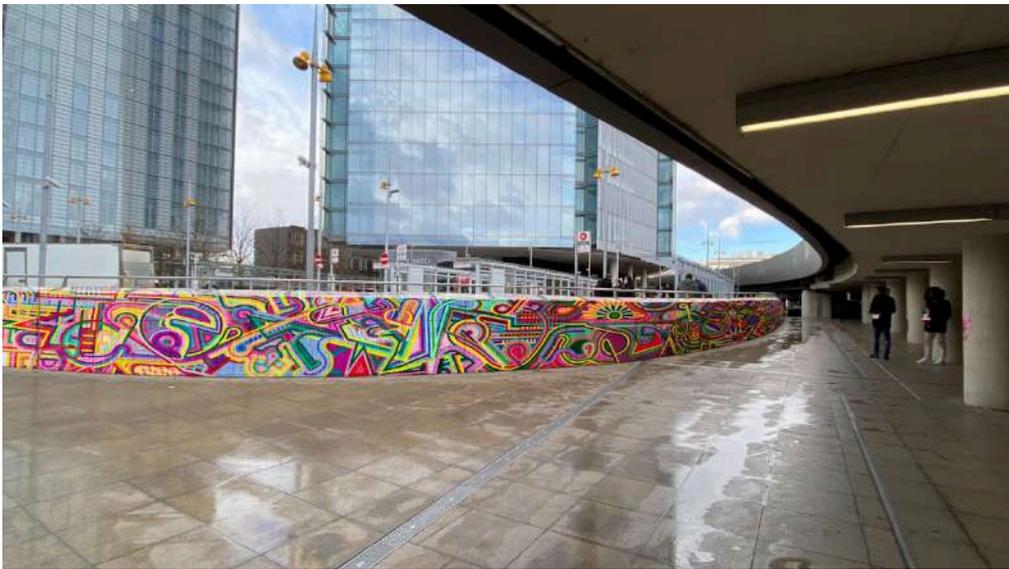


A fragmented celebration of identity

Largest-ever mural by Adam Nathaniel Furman and London School of Mosaic alongside London Bridge Station



Render of *A Thousand Streams*, a large-scale mosaic mural alongside London Bridge by Adam Nathaniel Furman and the London School of Mosaic.

- *A Thousand Streams* is a 57-metre mosaic mural that celebrates craft, community, context and diversity.
- The project is a collaboration between artist and designer Adam Nathaniel Furman and arts charity the London School of Mosaic.
- It is the largest-ever commission by the London School of Mosaic, with more than 21 million people projected to pass by each year.

The concepts of collaborative working and shared authorship have always been central to mosaic as an art form, and the collaboration between the London School of Mosaic (LSoM) and London-based artist Adam Nathaniel Furman represents a truly inspiring meeting of minds.

Together, they are producing a major large-scale public artwork beside London Bridge Station, born from their shared desire to celebrate the diversity of the city. Interested in the site as a literal and symbolic gateway into London, LSoM director

David Tootill secured access with the support of Network Rail, and Furman was selected through a competitive open call.

The title, *A Thousand Streams*, references the waterside location, as well as wider themes of community involvement. Sitting by the River Thames, LSoM and Furman took inspiration from the location, where flows of people converge, entering the city via the bridge and the rail station – one of the oldest and busiest in Europe.

Akin to the flow of a river, the approach of creating the mural involved the accumulation of many small contributions. To ensure as many people could participate as possible, LSoM set out simple, accessible parameters for the size and shape of individual tiles, against which Furman developed a clear design. It was important that any individual participant regardless of ability could make an area of the artwork in sessions with LSoM, and easily recognise where on the mural they had made their mark.



Mosaic making workshop. Photo courtesy of LSoM, by Corin Ashleigh Brown.

Queer community and mosaics

From an early age, Furman has been interested in mosaics. Visits to Eduardo Paolozzi's interiors in old Tottenham Court Road Station and the vast neo-Byzantine

Westminster Cathedral captured their imagination about the power of decorative art in public spaces.

"I'm fascinated by these two interiors, both of which are a very big part of the reason I became so interested in and passionate about the power of beautifully crafted, decorative art that integrates into public spaces and provides a sense of communal uplift. I used to visit and put my pocket money in the pot for donations towards the mosaics in the Cathedral when I was little."

– Adam Nathaniel Furman

Growing up as a young queer person, the place of mosaics in London had a deeper resonance. The Fitzrovia chapel, another of Furman's favourite London spaces which feature mosaics, was a place of contemplation and beauty, as well as the former chapel of a hospital where many people died from AIDS; and Tottenham Court Road station represented a doorway to the queer community in Soho.



Designer Adam Nathaniel Furman. Photo courtesy of LSOM, by Corin Ashleigh Brown.

Interested in how mosaics create an image through assembling many varied fragments, Furman's use of mosaics acts as a metaphor for the fluidity of identity

and importance of difference. The commission nods to larger artistic conversations about the material and political tensions within the history of the medium, embracing the democratic ethos of public artwork while making the beauty of mosaics accessible to as many people as possible.

Dusting off an ancient tradition

Over 21 million people are projected to pass by the mural over the course of a single year – three times the annual visitors received by the National Gallery. For the commission, it was of particular importance to LSoM and Furman to bring the beauty of mosaics to the largest possible audience, referencing both the public nature of the medium while positioning the craft tradition in a contemporary light.

Nearby, an archaeological site has revealed ancient Roman mosaics that also serve as inspiration for the commission. LSoM is currently coordinating a plan with Museum of London Archaeology, Southwark Council and Network Rail to hold a dual showing of the historic mosaics alongside the new commission.



LSoM director David Tootil. Photo courtesy of LSoM, by Corin Ashleigh Brown.

Completion date and funding call-out

The production work continues at LSoM, due to be finished before April 2024. In the tradition of mosaic, the ethos is communal, drawing upon the expertise and effort of recent graduates and local community. David Tootill leads the project, supported by Suzanne Garben and Jo Lewis.

The London School of Mosaic is now working with a number of local businesses to secure additional funding. Southwark Council is providing the funds to ensure the project will be completed, but further conversations are underway with potential sponsors to back the project by donating for their own bespoke panel. Interested parties should contact [lsomosaic.com](https://www.lsomosaic.com) for further information.

For more information about A Thousand Streams and Adam Nathaniel Furman's other projects, or to arrange interviews, contact anf@zetteler.co.uk.



LSoM volunteer working on installation of *A Thousand Streams*. Photo courtesy of LSoM, by Corin Ashleigh Brown.

Notes for editors

London School of Mosaic (LSoM)

Mosaic education in the UK has a long and inspiring history. Since 1860, several attempts have been made to establish an art school dedicated to mosaics in the UK, but LSoM's is the only one to have succeeded. Today, LSoM is an independent art school that offers a range of specialist short courses, workshops, accredited training and a Diploma in Mosaic Studies – the first of its kind in the UK.

Based near Hampstead Heath, the LSoM team have established over 350 installations in public spaces, won numerous national and international awards, and built a strong community around their work. In recognition, the Greater London Authority and Camden Council provided funding to develop the school into a community centre with an expanded remit, bringing together mosaicists, charities and local residents, which will open in late 2023. Commissioning Adam Nathaniel Furman to design *A Thousand Streams* continues their work to promote the historical medium, and is their largest public artwork to date.

somosaic.com

Adam Nathaniel Furman

London-based artist and designer Adam Nathaniel Furman is one of the most exciting, positive and provocative voices in the contemporary architecture and design space. Known for their gloriously colourful, unapologetically flamboyant interventions in public space, Adam creates spaces, objects and artworks at all scales – from collections of glass and porcelain vessels they designed for Lebanese craft collective Beit, to high-impact public-space interventions such as 2021's irrepressibly joyful 'anti-monument' Proud Little Pyramid, which celebrated the queer history of King's Cross.

Adam's work has been exhibited in London, Paris, New York, Milan, Melbourne, Rome, Tel Aviv, Mumbai, Vienna and Basel, and is held in the collections of the Design Museum, Sir John Soane's Museum, the Carnegie Museum of Art, the National Gallery of Victoria, the Abet Museum, and the Architectural Association. In May 2022, with Josh Mardell, Adam published the Colvin Prize-shortlisted book *Queer Spaces* with RIBA – a landmark anthology of LGBTQIA+ places around the world that is now featured on university architecture reading lists.

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