

Roman Mosaic Themed Wall Hanging

By Dorothea de Beckham

Barony of Red Spears

Constructed for the Canton of Hrothgeirsfjodr Yule Feast 2025



Screenshot of [Mosaic uncovered at the Liberty of Southwark](https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/roman-mosaic-floor-unearthed-in-london-180979632/) by [MOLA](#) on [Sketchfab](#), via <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/roman-mosaic-floor-unearthed-in-london-180979632/> (Accessed 2025)

Baron Leofric, Baron Red Spears, requested wall coverings for the Yule Feast event hall which for several years has been held in a multi-purpose gym with large, plain walls. Banners, tapestries, and curtains have been prevalent in the SCA for aiding the atmosphere of our events, and are often stored and transported throughout the year for multiple uses at different sites. For this reason, modern materials were chosen for practicality that would withstand wear and tear. The scale of this project was due to the large expanse of wall to be covered and the first tarp completed was a wall map of the Midrealm for Yule 2024. The 2025 project is based on a Roman floor mosaic found in London in 2022 and currently undergoing conservation.

The Southwark Roman mosaic is a 10 foot section of tessellated floor made up of red, white and black tesserae with a pattern featuring large lotus flowers, blooms, twists of closed loops and domed elements. This mosaic was chosen for its geometric pattern and opportunity to provide more color-by-number opportunities as a group project. The color scheme was modified slightly to accommodate the different media of stones and paint and highlight a canton and baronial color scheme. The pattern was modified to fit the slightly smaller and elongated area of the tarp used as a wall hanging instead of a square room floor decoration, approximately 6 ft

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x 9 ft. The 'jellyfish' end motif, instead of being half the width, was enlarged to full length in order to provide enough space for the updated center roundel.

The Southwest Heritage Trust in the UK is currently building a [reconstruction of a Roman Villa in Somerset](#). In November 2024 they finished a 5 year project to mosaic the floor of the dining room and antechamber and captured the installation with a time-lapse video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4PIFrto962c>). The process shows the guidelines, forms and tools used by volunteers laying the tesserae. Several motifs are used in both the Southwick and Somerset mosaics, including the lotus flower motif at the end of the video.

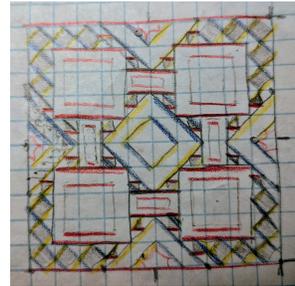
The wall hanging project is privately funded although work was usually done during canton meetings or other practices.

Project Stages

1. Concept sketches and research (*Winter 2024-25*)
2. Materials:
 - a. Sketchbook, pencils and colored pencils
 - b. Purchase new painters tarp (*Spring 2025*)
 - c. Materials reused from previous projects: Sketchbook, notebook, pencils and colored pencils, erasers, some paint, distilled water, carpenter pencils and sharpeners, paint brushes, plastic painter drop, folding tables
 - d. Materials on hand: plastic cups, bamboo skewer stir sticks, plastic spoons, paper towels, boxes and bags for carrying materials, string,
 - e. Materials for stencils: plastic 3-hole page protectors, sharpie, exacto knife, hole punch, pencil or pen, graph paper
 - f. Purchase new paint for missing and additional colors
 - g. Purchase additional brushes to have enough for helpers
 - h. Created for this project:
 - i. Knotted string measure (with washer end for arcs)
 - ii. Stencils - dot alignments for Roman Twists
3. Scaled sketches and layout (*March-April 2025*)
 - a. Create knotted string measure to scale design on the tarp (*March*)
 - b. Create stencils for Roman twists (*April*)
4. Drawing on the tarp in pencil during Canton meetings (*March-June, 2025*)
 - a. Scaled to tarp size, add large section borders, triangles and squares (*March*).
Adjust string measure as needed
 - b. Add boxes between the large squares (*March*)
 - c. Add Border edges and tracks for the twists (*March-April*)
 - d. Add Roman Twists to fit each section (*April-May*)
 - e. Draw Large outline of the 'Jellyfish' end cap (*June*)
 - f. Overdraw final lines for easier to see darker painting guidelines (*June*)
 - g. Design and fill in four large Triangles and five Squares (*June*)
 - h. Design and fill in the diamond between the 'Jellyfish' (*June*)

5. Sew loops and hem the cut-edge (October)
6. Finalize painting design changes
7. Painting by color and sections (August - November)
 - a. Note original paint colors and color codes
 - b. Document ratios if color mixing
 - c. Follow the sketch color schemes as much as possible.
8. Touch Ups
9. Sharpie overdraw for mosaic visualization

Photos



Step 1: Sketches to understand the pattern and dimensions:

Step 2: I bought a longer tarp than I needed so it got cut in half. String for measuring was also prepped at a canton meeting and refined at the next canton meeting while starting to draw pencil lines on canvas.



Step 3: Area stencils for twists. Note different stencils were used in each type of area during this project, and stencils were modified during the process for better results.



Step 4a: After the large diamonds and triangles are in place the next steps include drawing inner large squares and making templates for the twists. Pictured: the tarp draped over a table with the string measure, carpenter pencil, sketchbook, and draft pattern. Note: the light pencil lines on the tarp are not clear in photos.



Steps 4b, c, d in progress:



Step 4f-g in progress:



Step 4g: Sketching the pattern outlines is nearly completed. Photo by Bestia / Robert Harper



Photo by Bestia

Step 7: Many rounds of painting:



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