



SAMA 2005 Membership Survey Summary of Findings

Objectives of the Survey

As SAMA marked its fifth anniversary, the Board of Trustees recognized the importance of gathering some basic information about our membership, both in terms of their activity in mosaics and their involvement in and attitudes toward SAMA. The findings will be used to guide and focus the fulfillment of our mission statement, and will be fed into a strategic planning process to inform and direct our programs, activities, and services.

How the Study Was Conducted

In November 2005, a questionnaire was mailed to nearly 1,000 SAMA members in the U.S. and abroad. The survey consisted of 50 multiple choice, short answer, and open-ended questions. The survey was constructed and the data tabulated and analyzed in consultation with and with oversight by a highly qualified survey research professional. We received 333 responses, exactly one-third. We believe that this level of response allows us to present the results as a representative profile of our active membership.

P.O. BOX 624
LIGONIER
PENNSYLVANIA
15658-0624

KEY FINDINGS

Member Demographics

87% of our members are women. On average, we are between 35 and 54 years old and hail from every corner of the country. About 5% live outside the U.S.

Activity in Mosaics

Level of Expertise

TOLL FREE
866.902.SAMA

DIRECT
724.238.3087

FACSIMILE
724.238.3973

Our membership is overwhelmingly new to mosaics, working in the medium an average of 4 to 6 years. This reflects the fact that the art form is relatively new to public consciousness in this country.

Membership is evenly split between those who consider themselves professionals (part-time or full-time, including those who teach) and those who are hobbyists.

60% of members describe their skill set as intermediate, 11% as beginner, and 29% as advanced.

Half of our members report no formal training/education in fine arts. Nine-in-ten say they learned mosaics either entirely or mostly on their own. At the same time, 40% have taken at least one class/workshop in mosaics. Among those who report having taken studio art classes in other media, painting, drawing, and ceramics are most popular.

Time and Space

Reflecting the diversity of our membership, there is a marked dichotomy in the amount of time per week members report working in mosaics. 19% report spending less than 5 hours a week. At the other extreme, the same percentage of members report spending a full work week (30 to 40+ hours) on their art. On average, SAMA members report spending between 10 and 19 hours a week on mosaics.

Two-thirds of our members have a dedicated workspace—100 to 200 square feet on average.

Only 11% work with any paid assistants.

Materials

Members work with a broad spectrum of materials. Individually, they report working with 6 different materials, on average. The most popular materials are ceramic tile, vitreous glass, found objects, stained glass, and smalti. Among those who cite a preference for one or two materials, stained glass and vitreous glass are mentioned most often, followed by ceramic tile and smalti.

Formats

The majority (60%) of members spend most of their time on nonfunctional mosaics. About 70% report spending more than half their time working in two-dimensional formats. Only 5% of members say they devote more than half their time to public art installations.

Annual Expenditures

Members mosaic-related annual expenditures are summarized below.

Item	Average Annual Expenditure
Books, Publications	\$100-\$200
Mosaic Classes	\$400-\$500*
Materials	\$600-\$1,000**
Tools	\$100-\$200

* The majority of members spend nothing on mosaic classes. Those who do take classes, however, typically spend between \$400–500 in a year.

** 32% spend less than \$600; 45% spend between \$1,000–5,000; 6% spend between \$6,000–20,000.

The Commerce of Mosaic Art

More than three-quarters of our members report sales activity. The typical member sells her mosaics at retail through multiple channels (own studio, art/craft galleries, juried and non-juried craft shows, and own website). By far the predominant (61%) sales channel is direct commissions for custom work.

One-third of members report consignment arrangements with galleries and retailers, while less than 20% report any wholesale activity.

40% of members have a presence on the Web; 36% have their own website.

Two-thirds of our members report that mosaic art generates little, if any, of their annual income. Among those who sell and who responded to the annual income question (22% chose not to answer), 34% said that they earn less than \$5,000 annually from the sale or teaching of mosaic art. 10% report income between \$5,000–10,000; 5% between \$10,000–20,000; 5% between \$20,000–40,000; and 3% at \$40,000+.

SAMA Membership

Involvement in SAMA

SAMA membership is growing steadily and is reflected in annual increases in conference attendance and submissions to SAMA’s juried exhibition.

The primary motivations for joining SAMA are summarized below.

Reason	% Mentioning
To support mosaic art activity	49%
To meet like-minded artists	43%
To increase exposure to community of mosaic artists	35%
To attend SAMA workshops/seminars	29%
To attend annual conference	25%

One-third of our members cited all five reasons for joining.

Annual Conference

The annual conference is the SAMA program of most importance to members. Just over half of respondents report having attended at least one annual conference.

Among attendees, the exhibitions, presentations, workshops, and networking opportunities are all considered to be very important and earned high marks. Of somewhat lesser importance is the vendor marketplace. Members report spending between \$100 and \$200, on average, at the vendor marketplace at the last conference they attended.

Cost, scheduling conflicts, and distance are the main reasons cited by those who've never attended an annual conference.

Groutline

Most members reported high satisfaction with our quarterly newsletter, giving high marks to content and format.

Website

There was less satisfaction with the SAMA website, now undergoing a major overhaul.

Members visit the site only once or twice a month, on average. Respondents most often requested improvements in overall organization, navigation, and menus; more frequent updating; and members-only opportunities.

Involvement in Professional Activities Outside of SAMA

One-in-three members report participating in online mosaic forums outside of SAMA. The predominant forum is www.MosaicArtists.org, a Yahoo Group.

Looking to the Future

When asked what programs or activities SAMA should explore, the vast majority of respondents say *regional activities*. There is also high interest in business and marketing guidance and support, and in efforts to raise public awareness of SAMA and mosaic art in general. In this last area, members are particularly interested in more exhibition opportunities and in SAMA-generated media and publications.

Members were asked what SAMA should focus on in future conferences. Presentation topics of highest interest included those on business/marketing/pricing/sales, mosaic art history, design theory, outdoor installations, and artist retrospectives. Hands-on workshops of greatest interest included those on technique (indirect/double-direct/double-reverse), sculptural technique, and smalti. As for technical skill demonstrations, members are most interested in those that focus on use of particular tools, followed by demos on grouts and adhesives.

01/29/06