

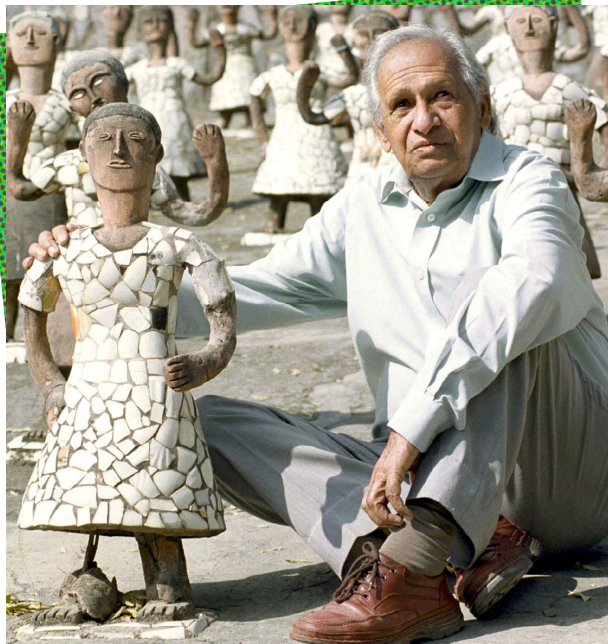
MOSAIC * BUG * HOUSE

Topics: public art, sculpture, mosaic, architecture

Supplies:

- tin can or other container
- cardboard
- small found objects: buttons, beads, dried beans, rocks, etc.
- salt
- flour (no flour? Substitute hair conditioner and cornstarch)
- water

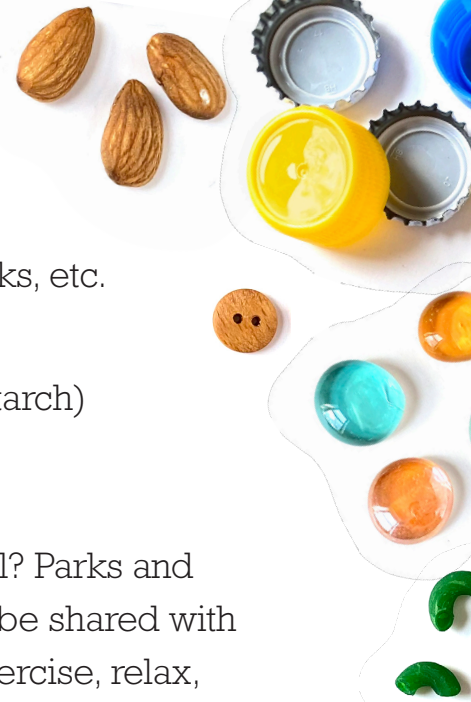
Is there a playground in your neighborhood or at your school? Parks and playgrounds are two kinds of spaces designed by people to be shared with a community. They are places for coming together to play, exercise, relax, and explore. What other spaces in your neighborhood are for sharing? **Nek Chand** and **Antoni Gaudí** are two people who designed public spaces for people to visit and enjoy.



Nek Chand

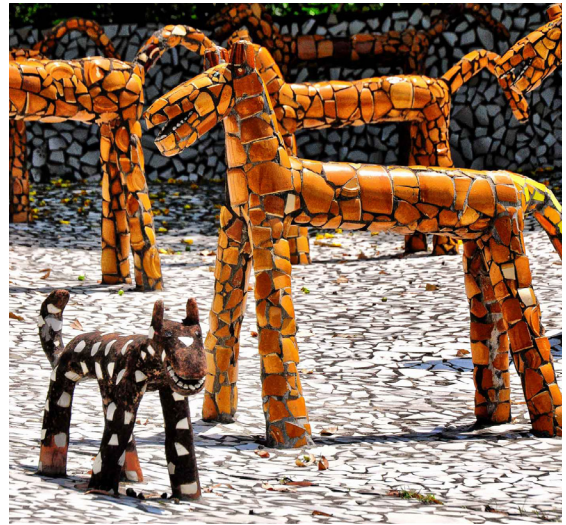
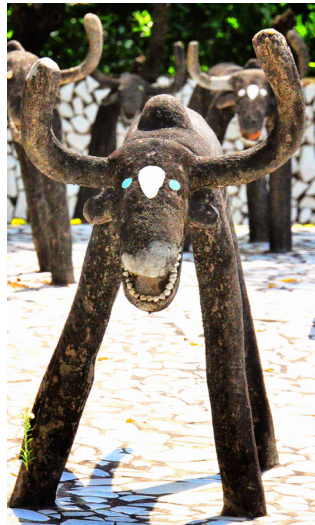
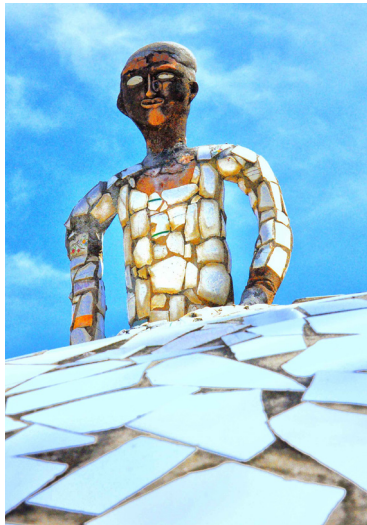


Antoni Gaudí

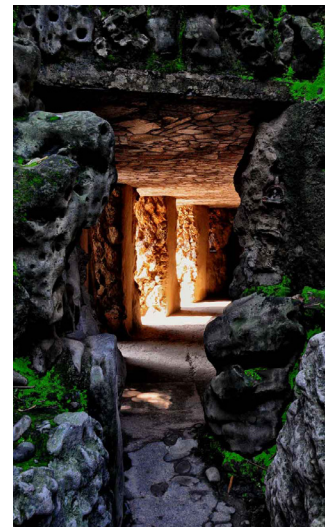
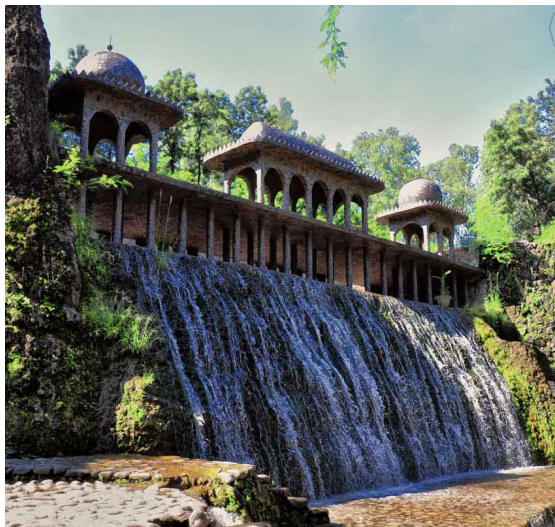


NEK CHAND

Nek Chand was born in what is now Pakistan. At the time, Britain controlled the land where Nek and his family lived. In 1947, Britain gave up control and split the land into two countries: India and Pakistan. Nek Chand was forced to move to Chandigarh, a city that was being rebuilt in India. In Chandigarh, Nek worked as a road builder for the new city, but at night he would carry bits of broken pottery and other materials from construction sites to a secret location.



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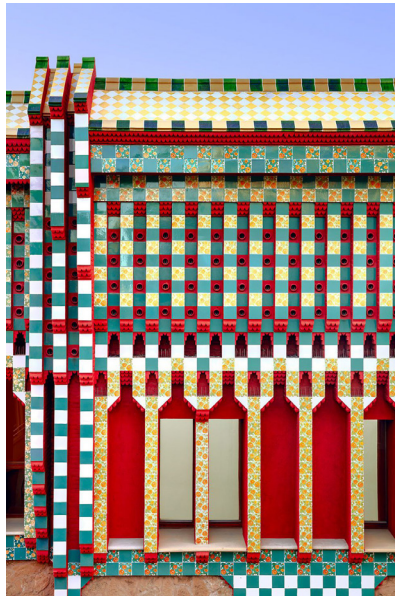
Nek built the **Rock Garden of Chandigarh**. When it was first built, nobody but Nek knew it existed. It took the government almost 20 years to discover it! During that time, Nek built courtyards and pathways filled with sculptures of people and animals. When the government discovered Nek's garden, they wanted to destroy it. But so many people loved the garden that it was saved. Today, Nek Chand's rock garden is one of the most visited places in all of India!

ANTONI GAUDÍ

Antoni Gaudí was an architect from Catalonia in Spain. He is known for his unique style inspired by nature as well as Catalan culture and identity. Antoni designed some of the most famous buildings and spaces in the world! One of his most famous projects is the **Sagrada Família**, a basilica in Barcelona, Spain. The Sagrada Família is so elaborate that it is still being built today- over 140 years after construction first began! **Park Güell**, also in Barcelona, is a public park designed by Antoni that features mosaic sculptures, benches, and walls. What words would you use to describe the colors and shapes of Antoni's work? How do the pictures make you feel?



Sagrada Família



Park Güell



Park Güell



Park Güell

Clockwise from top left: Wikipedia, David Cardelus, David Cardelus, citywonders.com, Andrew Petcher, tiges.com, tiges.com

MOSAIC

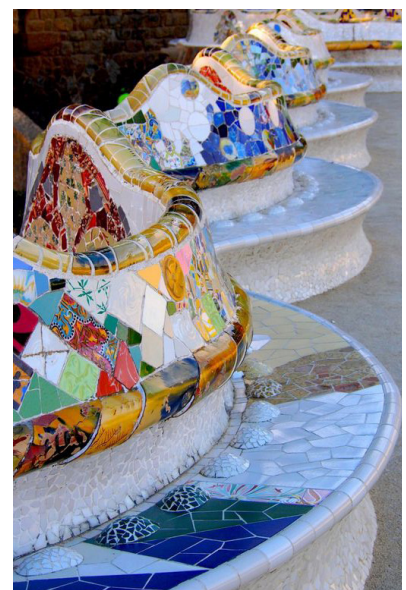
Both Nek Chand and Antoni Gaudí used **mosaics** in their work. Mosaics were first made in Mesopotamia over 5000 years ago! To make a mosaic, artists place small pieces of material next to one another to create a pattern or picture. They are most often made using small pieces of glass, but artists all over the world create mosaics using different materials from paper to ceramics and even trash!



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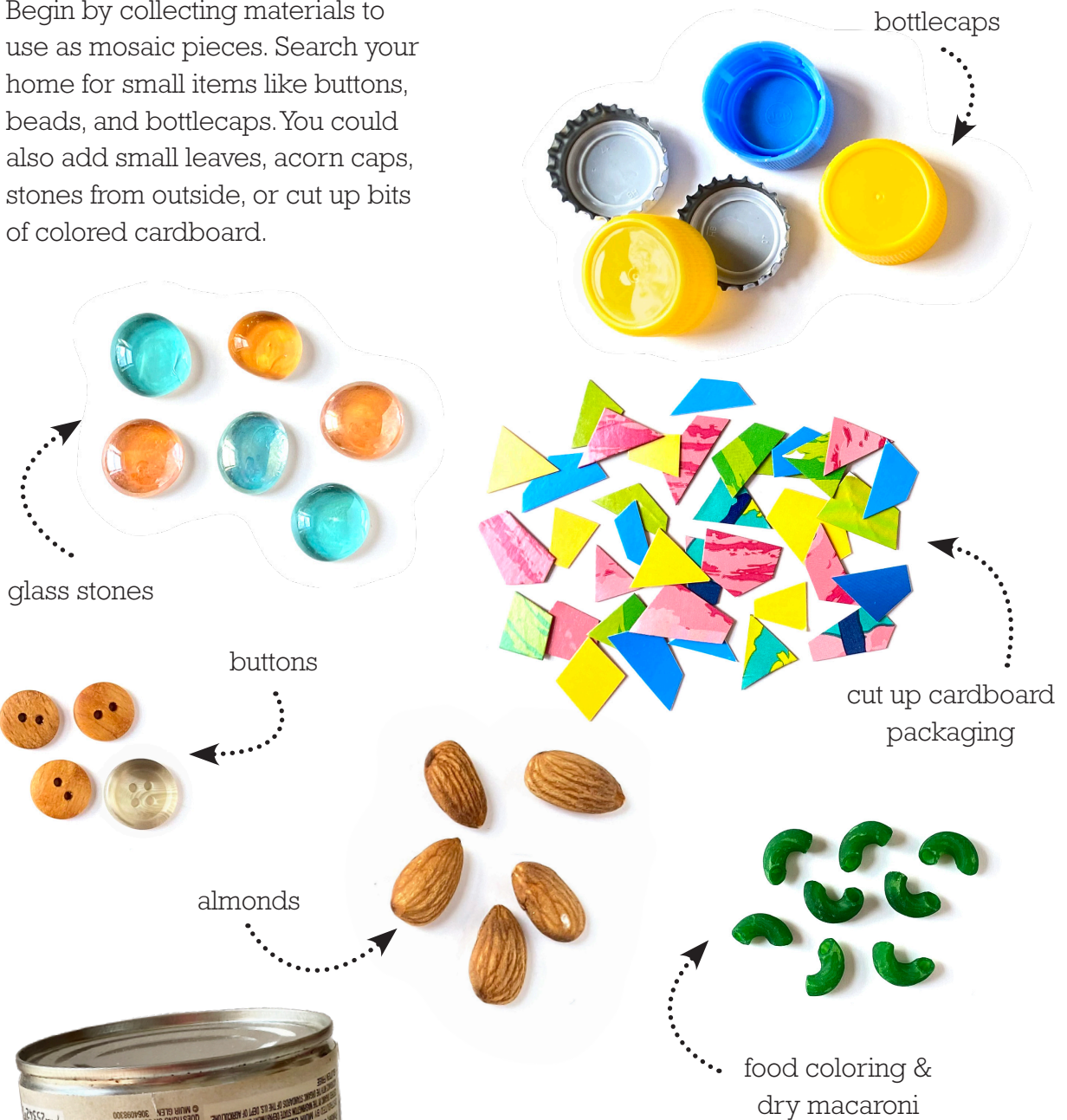


photo copyright Chantal Menhem



Let's make a mosaic bug house!

1 Begin by collecting materials to use as mosaic pieces. Search your home for small items like buttons, beads, and bottlecaps. You could also add small leaves, acorn caps, stones from outside, or cut up bits of colored cardboard.



2 Use an upside down tin can for the base of your bug house.

Let's make a mosaic bug house!

3 Now it's time to create a surface for your mosaic pieces to stick to! Mix $\frac{1}{2}$ cup flour, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup salt, and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cold water in a bowl to create clay. If it feels too sticky, add a little more flour.

* If you don't have flour, mix equal parts cornstarch and hair conditioner. Add extra cornstarch if it's too sticky.



4 Spread and press a thin layer of clay all over your tin can.

5 Press your mosaic pieces into the clay. How will you design your mosaic? Will you create a picture or make a pattern? Will there be windows and doors on the house? Once finished, let the clay dry.



REFLECTION

Antoni Gaudí said:

**“Anything created by human beings is already
in the great book of nature.”**

What do you think he meant by that?



Set up your bug house on your window sill, in a garden or your backyard, or on a fire escape!. What words would you use to describe it? Were certain materials harder to press into the clay than others? Why do you think that is? What if your bug house was big enough for a person to live in?

RESOURCES & SOURCES

Resources

Support your local bookstore and order a copy of "[The Secret Kingdom](#)" by Barb Rosenstock, a picture book about Nek Chand's rock garden.

View [panoramas](#) of the rock garden on the website for the Nek Chand Foundation.

Check out [Philadelphia's Magic Garden](#), designed by artist Isaiah Zagar!

Learn about [Fonthill Castle](#) in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. Once home to ceramist Henry Mercer, it is built from concrete and covered almost entirely in tiles on the inside.

[Cas Holman](#) lives in Rhode Island and designs playgrounds! Watch a documentary about Cas in an episode of the show "Abstract" on [Netflix](#).

Watch a [video](#) about Antoni Gaudí's buildings in Barcelona from Lonely Planet.

Sources

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