

Central Tile & Terrazzo Earns National Recognition for Public Art Project at Gerald R. Ford International Airport

Award-winning terrazzo installation captures Michigan's dunes, forests, industries and waterways in vibrant public artworks designed by local artists.

FREDERICKSBURG , TX, UNITED STATES,
July 24, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The
[National Terrazzo & Mosaic Association](#)

(NTMA) has recognized [Central Tile & Terrazzo](#) of Kalamazoo, Michigan, with a 2025 Honor Award for its outstanding work in the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Concourse A expansion. The award was presented on May 21 in Brewster, Massachusetts, at the NTMA's annual convention.



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Central Tile & Terrazzo's exceptional work at the Gerald R. Ford International Airport highlights the artistry and expertise that define our industry.”

*Chad Rakow, Executive
Director, National Terrazzo &
Mosaic Association*

The Grand Rapids, Michigan, airport's 155,000-square-foot expansion included 24,000 square feet of epoxy terrazzo, marking the fifth phase of an ongoing terrazzo installation program. For this phase, the airport expanded upon its signature five-color terrazzo wave pattern by enlisting four local artists to create unique terrazzo artworks, integrating a total of 54 colors. Each artist was assigned a theme—water, city, dunes, and countryside—to visually guide passengers through the diverse landscapes of western Michigan.

George Eberhardt III, an artist, muralist, and teacher, created a 15-foot-diameter terrazzo design inspired by Katsushika Hokusai's woodblock print "The Great Wave off Kanagawa," incorporating water elements evoking Lake Michigan.

Vietnamese-American illustrator, designer, and artist Kim Nguyen's terrazzo artwork reflects Grand Rapids' identity and regional surroundings, incorporating themes of agriculture, manufacturing, and the medical industry. It also references the city's history as "Furniture City" and features the Grand River flowing toward Lake Michigan.

Michael Pflieghaar, an illustrator, painter, and ceramicist, transformed his plein-air paintings into terrazzo patterns that reflect the forests and farmland of West Michigan.

Maureen Nollette's design captures the vastness of Lake Michigan's rolling dunes and native flora. Her work was inspired by a Sand Cherry shrub she photographed along a Michigan roadside beach. Ms. Nollette is a visiting assistant professor at Grand Valley State University.

The zinc divider strips for the art pieces were precision waterjet-cut and welded to mesh, while all other divider strips were bent on-site by hand, following template guides. The sweeping terrazzo waves extend the airport's existing design language, reinforcing visual continuity and subtly directing passenger flow.

[Mead & Hunt](#) of Middleton, Wisconsin, was the architecture firm leading the project, which was completed in February 2024.

The Gerald R. Ford International Airport specifies epoxy terrazzo for its passenger ticketing and concourse areas due to its durability, ease of maintenance, and design flexibility, according to Scott Bragignini of Central Tile & Terrazzo, which was established in 1936 and joined NTMA in 1947. This art installation program is a partnership between the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority and the Frey Foundation.



AWARD-WINNING DESIGN: George Eberhardt III's terrazzo medallion design in Gerald R. Ford International represents Lake Michigan. (Viken Djaferian/FotoGrafix, courtesy of Central Tile & Terrazzo)



ARTIST Kim Nguyen's floor medallion design depicts in terrazzo Grand Rapids' cities, industries, and agriculture.

"This project showcases terrazzo's ability to create not only durable, long-lasting flooring but also large-scale works of public art that celebrate local identity," said Chad Rakow, Executive Director of NTMA. "Central Tile & Terrazzo's craftsmanship brings these artistic visions to life, creating an engaging and dynamic experience for travelers."

About NTMA and terrazzo

NTMA is a full-service nonprofit trade association headquartered in Fredericksburg, Texas. Founded in 1923, the association establishes national standards for terrazzo flooring and promotes quality craftsmanship in terrazzo installation. The NTMA provides complimentary services to architects, interior designers, artists, general contractors, maintenance professionals, and property owners. From helping the design community write specifications to providing technical assistance, the NTMA's goal is to support quality terrazzo installations.

The association's annual Honor Awards program celebrates design and construction excellence, recognizing the industry's most exceptional projects. By recognizing its members' accomplishments, the program promotes member contractors as the sole qualified resource for terrazzo installations that meet industry standards. Terrazzo veterans and design professionals evaluate the submitted entries.

Terrazzo originated in 15th-century Italy, evolving from the mosaic techniques of Ancient Rome. It was first created when Venetian marble workers found an innovative reuse for discarded stone chips. Terrazzo artisans still pour terrazzo by hand on-site, with options for precast and waterjet-



DEPICTING THE REGION'S forests and farmlands, Michael Pflieghaar's terrazzo design, translated to the floor from a plein air painting.



PRECISION WATERJET-CUT zinc dividers formed the terrazzo public artwork at Gerald R. Ford International Airport's Concourse A expansion. Maureen Nollette's terrazzo designs celebrate Lake Michigan's rolling dunes and native plants.

cut elements. Aggregates such as stone, recycled glass, or other materials—often sourced locally—are embedded in a cement or epoxy base and polished to reveal the chips. Terrazzo combines design flexibility with ease of maintenance and durability to last the life of the building.

Chad Rakow

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