

# TACTILE GEOMETRICS

HAND-CRAFTED DECORATIVE PORCELAIN TILES

## Partners

Niel Amon & Ruby Levesque



Tactile Geometrics evolved from the combined talents and interests of the partners Niel Amon and Ruby Levesque. This husband-and-wife team brings to Tactile Geometrics a variety of complimentary and dynamic disciplines, including prototype fabrication, photography, sculpture and graphic design.

Niel Amon was born and raised in Brooklyn, NY. Early on, his interest and ability in art was recognized and fostered by his parents. In high school, his focus was on advanced geometry and he worked summers for a local architectural firm. Upon graduation, Niel received an art scholarship from Wesleyan University in Connecticut. After two years there studying sculpture and print making Niel's interest shifted toward architecture. He left Wesleyan and found work as an architectural model maker in NYC, ostensibly to get a better understanding of the field. What ensued was a twenty+ year career as freelance model maker, working on projects and competitions for I.M.Pei, Richard Meier, SOM and Santiago Calatrava.

From a military family, Ruby Levesque spent her childhood and adolescence adapting to a regularly changing environment. Home was Korea, as were Vermont, Kentucky, Germany, and Hawaii, where she attended high school. After graduation, she moved back to the "Mainland", to Brooklyn, NY, to study art at Pratt Institute. Her professional experience is wide-ranging, from her involvement in the United Nations photo department, to production, design and management positions with several NYC graphic design firms. A major asset to Tactile Geometrics, she brings her photographer's eye for composition and the graphic artist's sense of rhythm and balance to create many of the distinctive designs in the company's tile line.

Ten years ago, Niel and Ruby began their collaborative work on relief sculptures, focusing on interdependent modular relationships and tessellation. They formed Tactile Geometrics to bring to market a line of tiles developed from their artwork. Niel and Ruby live and work in Brooklyn, New York.

First collaborative  
tile design,  
"Pinwheel"



Newest addition  
to the tile line,  
"Pop Art Mini"



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## FAQs

### What is Tactile Geometrics?

Tactile Geometrics was founded by artists/designers Niel Amon and Ruby Levesque to bring to market a tile line developed from our artwork.

### What are the tiles made from?

The tiles in Tactile Geometrics tile line are made with domestic porcelain, and hand-crafted in our studio.

### How are the tiles made?

We use a variety of techniques to form our tiles, as each design has its own specific requirements. Most of the tiles we offer are press-molded while others are slip cast.

### Can you explain press-molding?

Moist clay is pressed between two molds that form the top and bottom shapes of the tile. After the new tile is removed from the mold, excess clay is trimmed away the trimmed edges are softened. The tile is set aside to dry in controlled conditions until it is ready to fire in the kiln.

### What is slip casting?

In slip casting, clay in liquid form is poured into a porous plaster mold. As the water in the clay is absorbed by the mold, a shell of solid clay is formed. Once the desired wall thickness of the tile is achieved, the excess slip is poured off and the tile shell is left to harden in the mold until it is strong enough to remove for drying. Slip casting is more labor intensive than press-molding but it has its advantages, allowing us to produce the tiles that are difficult to make any other way, and the resulting tiles weigh less (because they are shells) without sacrificing strength.

### Are there different colors and glazes to choose from?

Our glaze palette covers a broad range of colors and surface textures to compliment any installation's color scheme. We offer 16 Transparent Gloss and 16 Satin Matte glaze colors, and new for Spring 2006, nine TwoTone crystal colors. Our TwoTone crystal glaze colors can be arranged in a graduated spectrum from red to sea green, but any of these colors can also look fantastic in a monochromatic array.

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### How should the Tactile Geometrics tiles be used?

Our tiles can be used in commercial or residential settings. The tiles are well-suited for traditional applications in the kitchen or bath; their fine art origin also make them a versatile tool for the installation designer to use in imaginative ways. Some examples would be: as frame or accents along interesting architectural features or details, or to create visual texture at junctions between walls and ceilings; also as archway cladding, fireplace surround or wainscoting.

### What are some of the unique features of the Tactile Geometrics tile line?

Our tiles are abstract, geometric, and rendered in high-relief. The crisp delineation of form is our aesthetic signature. Our tiles have been described as medieval and modern; they're evocative of both the past and the future. Their timeless quality is well-suited for these post-modern times. When arrayed in multiples, many of our designs also form Secondary Patterns, which create additional rhythm and visual interest.

### What do you mean by Secondary Pattern?

Secondary Pattern is the result of tiles' visual elements melding to form a new overall pattern. In the arrayed tile example, we have highlighted an area where a Secondary Pattern has been created.

### Your collaboration began with sculptural works. What would be a good example of a sculptural work that influenced the creation of the Tactile Geometrics tile line?

One example is a piece we call the "Ball and Cross Cube" This is a sculpture that is clad with over 200 4" x 4" slip cast ceramic tiles. Our on-line sculpture portfolio provides more in-depth view of our sculptural work, elements of which you will recognize, as they have been included in the Tactile Geometrics tile line ([www.tactilegeometrics.com](http://www.tactilegeometrics.com)).

