



# Motawi Tileworks: Contemporary Handcrafted Tiles in the Arts & Crafts Tradition

*Anne Stewart O'Donnell*

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Working out of a garage they had converted into a studio, Nawal Motawi and her brother Karim started a small art-tile business in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Beginning in 1992, they sold their hand-sculpted tiles at art fairs and the local farmer's market. Word spread; commissions started coming in; soon the Motawis were in demand.

Today Motawi Tileworks employs about thirty people and creates beautifully designed contemporary art tiles in the tradition of the Arts & Crafts movement. Many designs are inspired by the work of famous graphic artists--such as Dard Hunter--or architects--such as Frank Lloyd Wright--or by traditional textile patterns or Japanese woodblock prints. Others are born solely of Nawal's imagination. But each Motawi tile is an original jewel, embodying a sophisticated color palette and the finest craftsmanship.

In this book, Anne Stewart O'Donnell, editor in chief of *Style 1900* magazine, gives an engaging account of the Motawi Tileworks story, from the company's design and manufacturing processes through its unique inventory system. A foreword by Joseph A. Taylor, cofounder and president of the Tile Heritage Foundation, places Motawi Tileworks firmly in the forefront of contemporary tilemakers. The book concludes with a photo essay that leads the reader through the tilemaking process.

Illustrated with about 125 color photographs of individual tiles, murals, and installations, *Motawi Tileworks* is a must-read for anyone interested in Arts & Crafts design, tiles, and a small-business success story.

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