



MATTHEW JONAS — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

From left: Tara Performing Arts freshman Vivienne Fowler, 2021 graduate and project designer Aug. Plummer, freshman Aurelia Nicault and freshman Beatrice Schmidt look over a nearly finished mosaic panel while working in Boulder on Monday.

Students create stained glass mosaic sign

By Amy Bounds

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The eight-student freshman class at Tara Performing Arts High School is making its mark by creating a glass mosaic that will become a permanent sign for the small, private school in north Boulder.

“You don’t know the end result until you piece it all together,” freshman Beatrice Schmidt said as she cut sheets of colored glass into smaller chunks. “It’s such a cool, different art form. It’s really exciting to see it come together.”

Betsy Barricklow, the school’s

co-founder, came up with the idea to create a permanent sign for the school as an art project. The project was put on hold during the pandemic, then brought back this school year.

Boulder mosaic artist Betsy Hicks volunteered to help lead the project, including securing a grant from the Boulder Arts Commission.

She started by teaching a workshop for the students on mosaics, including teaching them how to cut the glass and use it to create patterns. She also gave them lessons on color concepts and working together on a large art piece.

“It’s really fun to create art-

work from broken pieces and found scraps,” she said.

She’s continuing to work with the students as they create the mosaic.

“I love all the excitement and enthusiasm of working with kids,” she said.

She said stained glass works well for outdoor art because it can survive Colorado’s weather extremes and winds. She’s using weather resistant materials, including specialized adhesive, grouts and sealants, to increase the strength of the piece.

The concept for the sign is three squares that reflect three main aspects of the Waldorf school — theater, travel and fes-

tivals. The three squares are topped with a stained glass representation of Tara’s name and the swirls of the school logo. The final sign will be 4.5 feet by 3.5 feet.

Once the overall concept was developed, Tara graduate August Plummer sketched the three graphic squares. The theater square shows Hamlet draped in a cloak and talking to Yorick’s skull. The travel square features locations from student trips, including New York. The festival square includes a candle, symbolizing the school’s candlelight festival, and the handbells students play at festivals.

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“The idea was to make a really cool sign that’s representative of the school,” Plummer said.

On Monday, the students painstakingly cut strips of green glass into smaller pieces to create the letters in the school’s name.

While there are tools that can create curved pieces, they said, the glass needed for the letters was too small.

So instead, they fit tiny pieces together to create the letter curves.

“If you think about it too much and try to get each piece perfect, you will drive yourself insane,” freshman Aurelia Nicault said. “So I just stopped thinking about it.”

Classmate Sophia Love agreed that getting the glass to curve is “really difficult.” But despite the challenges, she said, learning a new kind of art has been “really cool.”

Once the sign is complete, the school is planning a community unveiling ceremony.

“It’s cool that we get this opportunity,” freshman Kwaniyma Alves da Silva said. “I’m really proud of it.”



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Tara Performing Arts freshman Sophia Love cuts glass pieces for a panel in the mosaic in Boulder on Monday.



Finished glass pieces are seen in a mosaic panel, before being grouted in place, created by Tara Performing Arts students in Boulder on Monday.