

The Glass Mosaic Dish from Hellenistic Greece is an example of decorative glass mosaic. This shallow bowl reflects the lively spirit of the Hellenistic period. The use of green, blue, white and yellow create an unusual color palette that is vastly different from the floor or wall mosaics of this period, but the integration and combination square pieces are most closely related to what we understand as present day mosaic. The blue and green squares also feature a spiral pattern, which is potentially a reference to the Greek key. This key pattern has been used on many different vases since Early Greek art, and it is therefore a very identifiable reference to the Greek culture.

The dish was formed in a cast technique that was very common for glassware of the time.¹ The result is a very well preserved, intact object that has withstood the test of time. There are two small holes drilled into the side, possibly meant for handles.² These holes, however, are the only major imperfection found on this dish in present day. This dish was most likely created for an upper class domestic space, indicated by the unique and luxurious patterns.³ Many of these Hellenistic mosaics were created for party settings, often to honor Dionysus.⁴ They were noted as an “expression of taste and

¹ “The Collection Online - Greek Mosaic Dish.” <http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-online/search/245200?=&imgno=0&tabname=online-resources>.

² “Mosaic Glass Bowl.” <http://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/mosaic-glass-bowl>.

³ “The Collection Online”

⁴ Andrew Stewart, *Art in the Hellenistic World*, (Cambridge University Press, 2014). 219.

thought of their time.”⁵ It is possible that this dish was intended to be a drinking vessel for parties as many other mosaic dishes this size were.⁶

This, and other mosaic bowls, were not only an advancement on decor, but the production of glass mosaic also contributed greatly to the Hellenistic economy, especially out of Italy.⁷ With workshops producing and exporting dishes, jewelry, and wall decor at great numbers, there was a definite increase in desire for art as well as the elite needed glass for their parties. Although mosaics are typically associated with earlier civilizations, the Hellenistic period saw many great advancements and works in this medium. It is interesting to note how much influence a small glass vessel can have on a culture as well as history.

⁵ Jerome Jordan Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age*, (Cambridge University Press, 1986), 210.

⁶ Stewart, *Art in the Hellenistic World*, 220.

⁷ “Mosaic Glass Bowl.”

Works Cited

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