

Bridging the Confluence

2022

Ceramic tile, 98% recycled glass tile, reclaimed wood

Stacia Goodman
Mosaic Artist
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Josie Lee
Ho-Chunk Educator, Artist
Tomah, Wisconsin

The inspiration for this mosaic began with the profound natural beauty and wildlife of the Coulee Region where La Crosse is located. Imagine all that a Great Blue Heron sees as it soars the updrafts, searching the confluence of the Mississippi, Black and La Crosse Rivers.

But there's a deeper story. It is told in the mesmerizing geometric pattern of the heron's grand wingspan, designed by Wisconsin artist Josie Lee of the Ho-Chunk Nation.

La Crosse is the original ancestral land of the Ho-Chunk who have lived in the area for millenia. In fact, the name "La Crosse" comes from a game played by the Ho-Chunk on the bluff prairies, before the U.S. government attempted to remove the Ho-Chunk from the area around 1832, and repeatedly until 1872. Thankfully, the U.S. government was not successful.

It is the artists' intention that this artwork be a bridge to reconcile this painful past and celebrate the survival and resilience of the Ho-Chunk people. Today, they continue to live, work and own land throughout La Crosse County and the entire state.

This artwork was commissioned by the City of La Crosse, in collaboration with the City of La Crosse Arts Board.

