

## **INFORMATION & GUIDELINES FOR THE INSTALLATION OF SANSUMI LEAF MOSAICS**

### **RECOMMENDED INSTALLATION**

SOLISTONE Leaf Mosaics can be used in an extensive range of design applications, internally and externally. Applications include foyers, bathrooms, fountains, water features, pools, kitchens, feature walls and entertainment areas.

During manufacturing, leaves are hand sorted into coordinating colors and sizes and individually glued onto a mesh backing. As leaves are machine manufactured, no two pieces will be exactly alike. This variation is considered to be a desired feature in the product.

### **CURVED SURFACES**

Leaf Mosaic tiles can be installed around gently curved surfaces. Some manipulation of the tiles may be required in order to create uniformity between each sheet.

### **SUBSTRATES**

All substrates should be firmly fixed, flat, clean, dry and free of contaminants such as dust, oil, paint, sealers etc. to ensure proper adhesion. Painted surfaces must be scuffed or sanded for the product and adhesive to bond correctly. Wet areas need special attention and require appropriate substrates, e.g. concrete, cement boards (compressed sheet), and/or treated plywood. The use of reinforced waterproof membranes is suggested, and in the case of floors, a fall to the drainage point of no less than two inches.

### **WATERPROOF MEMBRANES**

Waterproof membranes prevent leakage of water through to the sub-floor framing and/or habitable spaces below. Particular attention must be paid to: carrying the membrane up the wall, outside shower boxes, installation of bond breakers, and sealing around penetrations. It is strongly recommended that membrane systems be used in all wet areas. Some systems may involve the use of a primer.

### **CUTTING**

Cuts can be done with either a wet saw or a hand grinder with a masonry blade. The mesh back can be easily cut with a utility knife. Some pieces may need to be removed and replaced by hand to make the installation look more seamless. For certain applications cuts may not be necessary. As there are no straight lines in the product, when approaching a straight edge the last row of leaves can be removed from the mesh and adjusted by hand.

## **ADHESIVE**

Follow the adhesive manufacturer's instructions carefully. We do not recommend one brand of adhesive over another. Please check with your local tile supply store for alternative and comparable products.

The manufacturer's literature will explain if the adhesive product is suitable for interiors and/or exteriors, as well as walls and floors. Most thinset mortars (multi purpose and polymer modified thinsets) are adequate for installing pebbles. A cement-based adhesive is generally suitable on masonry substrates where no movement is anticipated. Where slight movement could occur through thermal or pedestrian loads, a modified cement adhesive should be used as a minimum. A 1/4" – 1/8" notch trowel is recommended for most applications.

It is very important that each leaf is embedded in the adhesive. To make sure there is 100% coverage, tap the sheets into the adhesive gently with a rubber float and try to avoid having the thinset come up from in between the pieces.

## **GROUTING**

Grout should be suitable for joints up to 3/4" in width and designed for external or internal conditions whichever may be the case. Sanded grout is generally recommended for any grout joint larger than 1/8". Grouts are ordinarily a water mix but where some flexibility may be needed, a latex additive or similar product should be used. It is important to wait the interval recommended by the adhesive manufacturer before grouting to minimize dirt ingress between the pebbles and avoid the opportunity for dislodging of the pebbles.

In the event that one desires to better expose the leaves, it is suggested that during the grouting process, the installer repeatedly removes the excess grout from the joints by the use of a medium bristle brush and sponge. During this process, it is also recommended that, if necessary, the excess grout is carved from the edge of the leaves by use of an appropriate knife.

## **SEALANTS**

It is not necessary to seal this ceramic tile. However, we do recommend sealing the grout after installation. There are various products available on the market, however, we recommend contacting your nearest tile supplier for the most appropriate sealer for your application.

## **CARE & CLEANING**

SOLISTONE Commercial Leaf mosaic tiles must be regularly cleaned and maintained to extend the life and beauty of the tile. The pebbles can be cleaned with a neutral mild detergent. PH neutral cleaners for natural stones are highly recommended. Do not use abrasive cleaners, powders, scouring pads, steel wool or sandpaper.