

## Weaving for Peace (Part One)

*This week's guest-blogger, Giustino Caposciutti, is an artist and teacher. Born in Arezzo, Tuscany (Italy) in 1946, he now lives in Turin.*

*Since 1969, Giustino has displayed his work in solo and group exhibitions, and his paintings are now part of public and private collections owned by individuals, museums, municipalities, and foundations.*

*In 1993, Giustino invented a unique art form he calls "[Participatory Art](#)." The process involves a number of people working together to create a group expression based on a theme. The individual artwork is integrated into a giant mosaic in a public performance called "The Living Loom."*

*This is Giustino's account of how he adapted his "Participatory Art" form as part of the inaugural Week of Peace and Solidarity in Mazara del Vallo, Sicily.*

I want to share with all of you my experience in Mazara del Vallo, Sicily, during the Week of Peace and Solidarity organized by TPRF and the Municipality.

The Organizers asked me to create an event of Participatory Art, something I have done for many years as a well-known artist in Italy.

We named the event "Tessere per la Pace" which in Italian means "Weaving for Peace," or "Tiles for Peace." The purpose of the exhibition was to prompt people to reflect on the theme of peace, not as an absence of war but as an individual need, an inner necessity, as Prem Rawat simply explains and helps people to discover.

The goal is to create an enormous mosaic painted by one hundred people together in a public exhibition. We call this process a "Living Weaving Loom."

To create the mosaic, I began by preparing twenty long "strips" made of cotton canvas. Each strip carries five paintings created by individual artists. In this sense, each "tile" of the mosaic is a unique painting.

Teens from schools, people from the Arab community, local artists, and many others showed up to freely take part. Many brought their own brushes! Everyone tried to express, in a unique way, their feeling about the theme of the week in Mazara del Vallo: Peace and Solidarity.

Each artist found his or her own way to be part of the grand mosaic. Somebody painted a beautiful sunrise, someone else a bird or a fish, while others painted flowers or trees. An entire classroom from the local art high school, which won an award in the Contest for Peace held during the week, came to help people paint their tiles.

Costumed performers paraded the strips with the paintings affixed through the streets of the city for the townspeople to see, accompanied by a group of traditional Sicilian musicians and dancers.

People came out from their homes and shops to watch, interrupting their normal activities, and many of them joined joyfully in the parade.

*(Continued next week)*