



Zena is a professional artist, single mother, dedicated to sponsoring public projects merging ART and ADVOCACY. Born in Portugal, she grew up in Africa, lived in the UK, and now lives in Las Vegas since 2010.

Since 1996 she has been working professionally in Portugal and the UK, as an artist on commissioned art work, interior design, public spaces and community art projects.



During the summer of 1997, she travels with a group of artists, creating free spontaneous art events in small European towns. This experience inspires Zena to contact the Portuguese local authorities, offering to create a mosaic mural in a community center for all ages, with the participation of the neighborhood children.



In 1998 Zena funds the BABY BOOM - the children's area of the Boom Festival, the biggest international festival for arts in Portugal. The Baby Boom provides a safe and fun environment for children to play, do art and eat healthy meals.

As a volunteer, Zena works at IPO, Lisbon's oncology hospital, doing art with the pediatric patients. She also volunteers to teach art to children in disadvantaged communities, children at music festivals in Europe and problematic youth in the UK.



Using mosaic as her main medium, Zena keeps working in public and private spaces as an interior designer.



After being commissioned to work on a project for the Dalai Lama, and meeting His Holiness, at the end of 2001, Zena moves to Glastonbury, England. For the next 7 years, she works as a freelance photographer, and visual artist for the Tipi area at several UK summer art festivals, interacting with local and international artists.



In 2007, she becomes the European Executive Producer of ARTIVIST International Film Festival. Successfully she produces that American festival from Hollywood, in Europe for 2 consecutive years, helping the non profit organization. Bringing awareness to issues related to humanity, animals and nature, through art, Artivist is hosted in several venues including the British Parliament, inspiring it's members to change some legislation.

In 2008, Zena does her last project in the UK. She invites the problematic youth of a small town, to create a big mosaic on the park shelter. This project, gathering the whole community creates a powerful impact in the artists's vision for her life's mission. As she moves to the USA, similar projects become Zena's new "American dream". Art as a powerful way of healing and bringing different groups collaborating in meaningful projects, to benefit communities.



Living in Hollywood, LA for a short period of time, Zena becomes aware of the shocking problem of homeless youth. Supporting the artist/director Michael Leoni with his organization Spare Some Change, she goes out on the field with them, helping and feeding the street kids while the team



*"Merging ART and
ADVOCACY to empower local
communities"*

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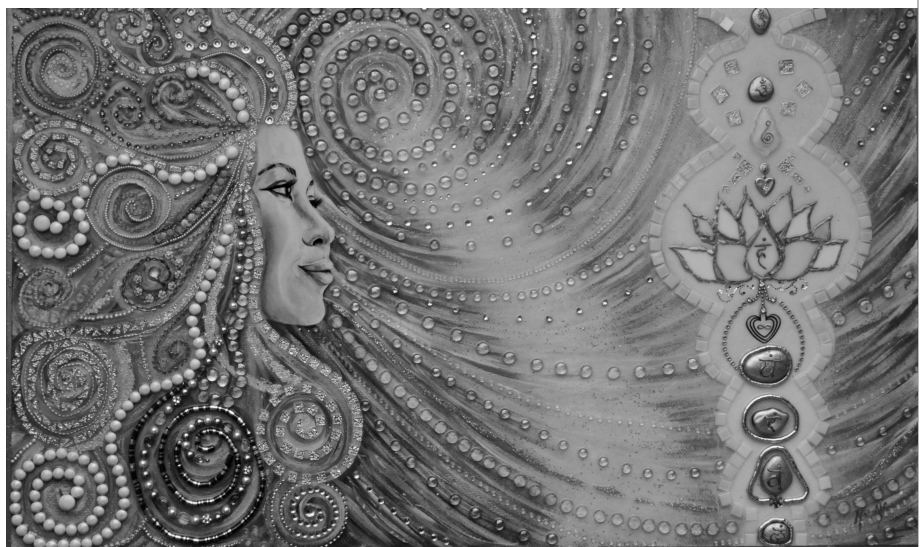
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?
v=AK1j8jrQAu8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AK1j8jrQAu8)

is filming the documentary American Street Kids. Having to move to Las Vegas in 2010, the issue of homeless teens is still in the back of her mind, and she is determined to involve them in future community art projects.

Between 2013 and 2015, Zena works as an art instructor at private schools in Las Vegas, while undergoing debilitating cancer treatments. At the end of the school year, the students performed 8 different puppet shows, using more than 250 puppets created by her and the children.

Since 2012, Zena has been fighting cancer, in Las Vegas. Using ART as a form coping and of therapy, she begins an introspective phase, exploring several new mediums and unique techniques, merging mosaic and painting combined, bonded with epoxy resin.

A collection of 3 auto biographic pieces, and other works, using the new technique, receives positive reviews during a show at the Arts Factory, First Friday event in Las Vegas March 2017.



"My passion is to help emerging the artist in each and every one of us, unlocking the doors of creativity; empowering my students and the local community."