



# COLORS OF THE NILE

PHOTO BY BECKY KIRKLAND



Intense planning for NC State LIVE's spring 2017 residency with The Nile Project began two full years in advance. As the project grew (and grew), not only did five other North Carolina universities come on board, so did colleges, departments and programs from across the NC State campus.

Units with interests as varied as sustainability, social entrepreneurship, conflict resolution and world music came together to learn, enjoy, inspire, educate and empower participants while exploring cultural, political and environment issues. The music – the arts – served as the vehicle.

Pros at getting *really* hands-on, the folks at NC State's Crafts Center dreamed up an interactive project to be created as part of the Nile residency. As NC State LIVE director Sharon Moore says, "Those crazy Crafts Center people like to come up with big ideas."

Jo Ellen Westmoreland (assistant director) and Jennifer Siegel (clay studio manager) hatched the notion of *Colors of the Nile*, a 36' x 7' mural comprised of nine wood panels. Mural artist Dare Coulter – a 2015 graduate of the NC State College of Design – was engaged to create the original work of art that depicts Nile River imagery, including the river, people, music, children, landmarks and poetry.

At NileFEST – the March 21 closing concert by the Nile Project – Coulter was joined by NC State students, the Nile musicians, and community members young



**Top:** students and community folks help paint the mural at NileFEST. **Above:** mural artist Dare Coulter and NC State nuclear engineering student Fahad Al Suwaidi, who added the Arabic poetry. **Below:** the scale model for the mural, painted on plywood.

and old to help paint the mural. She continued work on this extraordinary piece until its dedication on April 21, an occasion that featured live music by the renowned postmodern indie-classical quartet ETHEL. ●



DARE COULTER 2017