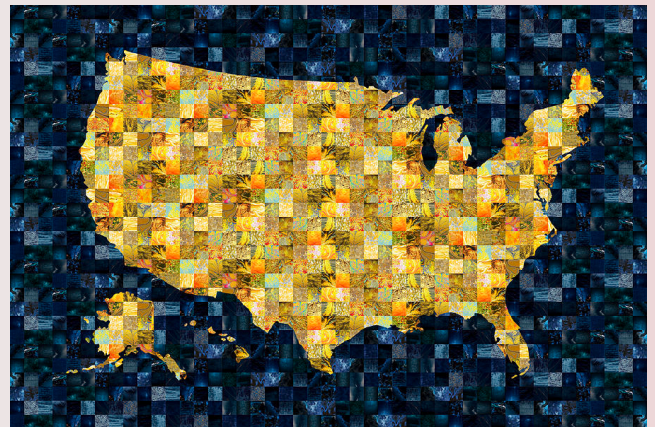




AMERICA A MELTING POT TO A BEAUTIFUL MOSAIC

Independence Day (July 4th) has been a federal holiday in the United States since 1941, but the tradition of Independence Day celebrations goes back to the 18th century and the American Revolution. On July 2, 1776, the Continental Congress voted in favor of independence, and two days later delegates from the thirteen colonies adopted the Declaration of Independence, a historic document drafted by Thomas Jefferson. Congress established Independence Day as a holiday in 1870.

America was established as a land of hope and promise. Immigrants flocked from countries all over the world, facing hardships and immersing themselves in the “American Dream.” America became a “melting pot”, made up of ingredients that complemented one another once blended, not merely existing side-by-side. Later, as immigrants began to diversify, they were thought as “un-American” until they assimilated. It has been recognized in recent years, that instead of a melting pot, it might be more accurate to call America a *mosaic*, in which colorful, individual pieces are fitted together to make a single picture.



A mosaic is a picture or pattern that is comprised of many different colored tiles. Each colored tile is distinct and whole, but joins other tiles to collectively become a single piece of art. If the tiles are assorted fashionably, then this single piece of art can be a beautiful mosaic. However, if just one tile is missing, tarnished or mislaid, the mosaic loses its beauty and becomes incomplete.



All the diverse cultures and traditions in America fit together like the tiles of a mosaic. European Americans were among the first immigrants to the United States, and they were all very diverse from one another. We fought for Independence and our freedom, the freedom to be our authentic self without having limits nor the permission “granted” to be YOU.

***“Coming together is the beginning.
Keeping together is progress.
Working together is success.”***

- Henry Ford

