

Specifying Stained Glass

Stained glass is a general term covering all forms of glass used in a decorative manner, primarily for windows, but also for a myriad of secular uses prevalent today.

Inasmuch as the stained glass craft is an adjunct of architecture, this Association favors the principle of architectural direction in the selection of artisans or studios and the commissioning of stained glass projects.

Products of SGAA artisans are ideas and concepts that are translated into site-specific designs satisfying the requirements of the project, budget and schedule. We believe that project success is better assured when a studio is selected not on the basis of a "square foot" bid but rather by virtue of artistic ability, imagination, past success and, of course, willingness to work within the project constraints of time and money. Consultation and design-progress review with the architect, client and artisan should take place before construction documents are complete. Early and regular review sessions are welcome; such will save time and prevent the needless cost of design adjustment.

Therefore, we believe that ideal conditions fostering mutual confidence and the best practical procedure will prevail when only one craftsman studies the problem with the architect and client. Should such a craftsman fail to provide a satisfactory solution, we believe that he should withdraw, thus permitting another craftsman to fully cooperate with the client.

If the prospective client wishes proposals from more than one craftsman, we earnestly recommend the following procedure:

1. A personal discussion is held with each craftsman invited that determines the client's likes and dislikes,

and to arrive at a general theme and style. If a special sketch is required, the artist will then be able to create the appropriate design.

2. The client makes known any budget restrictions. Any one of our members will gladly assist in setting up a practical budget.

3. The names of the craftsmen invited to make proposals are made known to all concerned.

Consultation between architect, client and craftsman should begin before contract documents are finalized. Early cooperation will assure a well-integrated design that considers all architectural, structural and interior building elements.

Historically, SGAA artisans prefer that their agreement be directly with the client, fully separated from the general contract; however, all are vitally concerned with the full satisfaction of the client and can adapt their process to fit the project.

Leaded Stained Glass

The Process: The preparatory sketch is translated into full-size mechanical drawings (cartoons) and further into actual patterns to be used to cut the glass. Once the patterns have been prepared and assigned color, the glass is cut into the myriad pieces required to build the window. When the design requires detail painting or ornamentation of the glass surface, it must be done with pigments designed specifically for stained glass. Once applied, the pigment is fired in a kiln to the proper temperature for the respective pigment, usually between 1000 and 1250 degrees Fahrenheit, thus assuring absolute permanency. The pieces of glass are joined together with lead came (H-shaped strips) and soldered at their intersections on