

AGG **Rocks** Cleveland



Text and Photography by Tony Glander

Roy Clark had a saying that he would hate to wake up in the morning with a friend at the front door saying, “You should have been there last night!” If you missed the American Glass Guild (AGG) Conference in Cleveland, Ohio, June 22–24, 2018, then I’m sorry to say, “You should have been there.”

The conference was held at the Downtown Cleveland Westin Hotel, just blocks away from Lake Erie and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. It was packed with activity. Workshops were held at the hotel as well as Whitney Stained Glass Studios. With an incredible historical selection of stained glass art throughout the city, Cleveland is a stained glass lover’s dream. Attendees had time to meet and greet and express their creative sides. An air of education and sharing spread throughout the weekend.

Workshops and Classes

This year’s workshops covered a wide range of techniques. Thursday, at Whitney Stained Glass Studio, Sasha Zhitneva taught a class entitled *Fused Glass as a Painterly Medium*. Indre McCraw’s glass painting class covered various painting techniques that were utilized in individual projects. There was also a group project that later ended up in the fundraising auction. Back at the hotel, Michael Dupille taught a class on how to create plaster molds used for kiln casting.

Friday’s half-day workshops continued with the variety of techniques. Graham Fox taught a great class explaining and demonstrating how to repair stained glass. Rich Lamothe used products from Bohle to teach a contemporary class on glass lamination. Keynote speaker Karl Heinz Traut discussed designing architectural glass art using Lamberts glass, and I taught a class on the basics of screen-printing on glass. Samples from all the workshops were displayed in the conference room for the remainder of the conference for attendees to see.

Friday Explorations and Creations

Cleveland’s historical stained glass was explored by a trolley tour Friday afternoon. Some of the highlights of the six incredible stops were Trinity Cathedral, President Garfield’s Monument, and Tiffany’s Wade Chapel. These historical monuments revealed not only stained glass but some incredible mosaics as well.



*(Top) Hallie Monroe’s panel paying tribute to David Bowie. (Bottom) Amy Valuck’s **Untitled** panel consisting of fused and stained glass.*

Friday night turned into an incredible artistic networking session with food, drinks, and fun artwork! Attendees wandered the sixth floor lobby where an exhibition of stained glass art by AGG members provided a colorful backdrop. Over a dozen members displayed incredible glass panels. Included in the exhibition was also a display of students' work from Ken Leap's classes at Bryn Athyn College. Leap also led a great social art making event. At the beginning of the event, a 9 foot by 12 foot canvas was hung, charcoal sticks were handed out, and attendees were invited to draw on the canvas. Later, pastel sticks were passed around, and people started coloring in the images they had created. It became the center of the evening's events as the creation unfolded. Attendees enjoyed the casual atmosphere of the evening.

Saturday Inspiration

Saturday started an exciting day of speakers and demonstrations. Karl Heinz Traut from Germany was the keynote speaker and gave an inspirational talk about designing with Lamberts Glass. Judith Schaechter delivered a humorous look at her art and how she approaches it. John Blazy impressed the crowd with his work with dichroic lamination for both small and large installations as well as guitars. Barbara Krueger educated the AGG attendees on Douglas Phillips' stained glass work and his connection to training with Jim Whitney, the AGG scholarship's namesake.



Ken Leap adds to Friday's canvas.

In the late afternoon there were three demonstrations that attendees could stroll through. Kathy Jordan explained how shaping and enhancing brushes enhance stained glass painting. Hallie Monroe demystified enamel paints through great demonstrations and examples. Finally, Janet Lipstreu enlightened attendees on the use of LED light boxes including how to order and operate them.

Weekend Wonders

Saturday evening was a combination of food, awards, and laughter. An incredible silent auction ran throughout the day. The banquet offered a time to honor two of the industry's leaders. Robert Jayson from Bendheim was presented with the AGG Nicholas Parrendo Lifetime Achievement Award for his impressive life of learning, leading, and supporting the stained glass industry. Sam Halstead received the AGG Inspiration Award for his documentary, *Lighting the Way* that explored the German pioneers of contemporary stained glass. After the banquet, the live auction brought a lot of friendly competition and laughter, and raised funds for some incredibly unique stained glass panels and other artwork.

Sunday was another full day of education and camaraderie. Mike Dupille presented a great talk on the engineering of large-scale art glass installations. Daniella Peltz covered stained glass paints and its problems over time. Kathy Barnard and Indre McCraw gave insights into their incredibly creative styles of art glass. Tom Krepcio helped attendees with computer file storage by explaining how to archive digital files properly.

Three more demonstrations gave participants time to walk around and visually understand various techniques. Graham Fox demonstrated casting molds. Judith Schaechter explained how she works with flash glass, and Charles Devillier explained a variety of leading tips, tricks, and techniques. To end the conference events, a closing reception was held Sunday evening at Whitney Stained Glass. Attendees marveled at an impressive studio, which was also an amazing museum of both past and present stained glass art.

A Unique Organization

The American Glass Guild is unique in its membership. It is an organization of volunteers. From planning to execution, a great conference like this could only be done by the dedication of a cooperative community. From conference planning to auction to exhibition, it is a community that works and plays well together and welcomes anyone to join.

This coming year promises to be another great conference. Plans are already underway for May 30 through June 2, 2019, in San Antonio, Texas. The American Glass Guild will be joining the Stained Glass Association of America for what promises to be a great joint conference in a great city. Make plans now to attend, then join the education and the fun.

GA

Visit www.americanglassguild.org to learn more about AGG and how to become a member.