

A “Glasstopia” Success

*Featuring the latest from
the American Glass Guild*

Text and Photography by Tony Glander



The American Glass Guild (AGG) Summer 2014 conference was an astonishing event. AGG's conferences have always been well planned and staged. What made this conference a “Glasstopia” was its incredible setting. The grounds of Bryn Athyn College, just north of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, provided a perfect combination of facilities that provided a great conference experience for the attendees. From displays to workshops to presentations, the AGG took full advantage of the grounds by using everything from a stunning cathedral to contemporary classrooms.

The Perfect Glass Art Venue

The Bryn Athyn campus offered an abundance of excellent places to exhibit the art that was part of this year's conference. All varieties of stained glass were found throughout the grounds. Hanging at the Glencairn Museum was the juried members' show *American Glass Now*. Displayed in the window of a sunporch area, the artistic panels were carefully mounted so that the light came directly through the panels. This allowed for full appreciation of the artists' hard work and talent.

The Glencairn Museum also was the stage for Narcissus Quagliata's lecture and award presentation. The great stone hall with its high ceiling and castle-like feel was the perfect setting for viewing his elaborate and grand designs, all large-scale work that depicts exotic settings from around the world.

The Doering Center is an incredible space with large glass windows and high ceilings that housed a wide array of glasswork. Stained glass panels from the high school student organization, Doors that Open Windows, were exhibited there and provided great examples of self-expression. Also in the lobby were panels from J. Kenneth Leap's college class that included both stained and fused works of glass art. Topping off the building on the second floor was a members' show that included stained glass panels exhibiting incredible painting skills.

A short walk across the beautiful campus was the Brickman Center, which housed a number of stained glass panels donated by members for the annual fundraising auction. And, of course, the Bryn Athyn Cathedral, just across the street, is a stained glass lover's dream.



*Sean Merchant's panel, part of the
American Glass Now exhibition.*



Ervin Bossanyi's window in the National Cathedral, Washington, D.C.



National Cathedral, Washington, D.C.



Head of Christ, pot metal and white glass with silver stain and sanguine, 16th century. Pitcairn Collection of Medieval Glass, Glencairn Museum.

Learning and Growing

Workshops were held in the Doering Center in college classrooms typically used for science classes. This provided a great work space that allowed instructors the ability to use kilns and paints with the proper ventilation. At the same time, it also allowed instructors to have comfortable lecture space so they could present all of their information.

The two factors that led to strengthening member relationships were the dining hall and dormitories. Attendees took full advantage of these opportunities to meet new people, talk to presenters, or simply catch up with old friends. People who stayed in the campus dormitories found the casual evening gatherings in the cool summer evenings a great time to relax and catch up as well.

As wonderful a location as Bryn Athyn College proved to be for "Glasstopia," it was overshadowed by the quality of speakers, members, and the excitement that makes up the body of any AGG conference. The contacts and continued friendships are the main key.

As this well-planned conference came to a close, it was announced that the Summer 2015 AGG Conference would take place in Washington, D.C., with its sights set on another great cathedral!

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Visit www.americanglassguild.org to learn more about AGG and the organization's upcoming events.

Editor's Note: The photo caption in the AGG article on page 19 of the Glass Art September/October 2014 print edition mistakenly identified presenter Nancy Gong as Nancy Wong. Our sincere apologies go to Ms. Gong for this error.