



The Stained Glass Association of America Kicks Off Its 120th Anniversary Year



The illumination of Trinity's windows provides a rare and unique look at stained glass at night during Facet & Form.

Photo by Brett Deneve.

by Helen Shandraw

In 2023, the members of the Stained Glass Association of America (SGAA) will proudly celebrate our 120th anniversary. Throughout our long history, collaboration has proven to be the key to pushing the highest quality and finest examples of our work forward. We very much look forward to celebrating a renewal of that spirit throughout our anniversary year, culminating in an expanded celebration at our 112th annual conference in Buffalo, New York, September 27 through October 1.

Revitalizing the SGAA

The year 2022 was a time of excitement and revitalization for SGAA. Our new office on Trinity Campus in Buffalo was full of life and activity again as we collaborated with our local community to figure out how to return to our favorite gatherings and events. The year was a steamroller of travel, experiences, and unique opportunities through the International Year of Glass.

The SGAA officially received its 501(c)3 status in 2022 for the Stained Glass Association of America Foundation. This brand new charitable foundation will give us the tools that we need to raise funds and apply for grants to help serve our mission and build our capacity. With the new SGAA Foundation, we can bring the Association's national work to the streets of our communities for the very first time through all new glassmaking opportunities, revitalize apprenticeships, apply for grants to care for our archives, and expand our scholarship capacity.

The Return of the International Conference

For 111 years, the SGAA has had an annual summer conference to bring its members and enthusiasts together for a week of glass classes, lectures, and comradery. Like everyone else facing COVID-19 and a post-pandemic world, the SGAA was unable to hold a conference for two years, which was only the second time in the SGAA's history of missing a conference since they began in 1904. In 2022, the SGAA was finally able to host an in-person, international conference for the first time since 2019. Joined by the Society of American Mosaic Artists (SAMA), we took the glass city of Toledo, Ohio, by storm with a week of celebration, workshops, and in-depth presentations as we finally reunited with our giant, crazy, glass-loving community that we call family.

The SGAA also held its first-ever fundraiser and celebration event at our headquarters in Buffalo, New York, in honor of our new foundation. During *Facet & Form: Glass Tradition Reimagined*, we teamed up once again with SAMA, multiple SGAA studios, and Buffalo's Trinity Episcopal Church for a night of live stained glass and mosaic demonstrations. Together, we created a unique and, quite literally, illuminating look at the construction and preservation of Trinity's historic windows. *Facet & Form* successfully brought new and local attention to our organization and created new partnerships to help support our new foundation. We look forward to making this a regular event in the years to come.



Conference attendees viewing *The 7 Pillars of Humanity* by Holdman Studios, brought to Toledo specifically for the conference.

Photo by Kyle J. Mickelson.

Returning to Buffalo

The local event was so successful that we are bringing our annual conference right back to Buffalo for our 120th anniversary celebration. We are excited to partner once again with the Society of American Mosaic Artists (SAMA) as we create a more inclusive conference experience for artisans, representing the many potentials across our mediums and materials. By meeting in our home city, we can provide all new tours and educational experiences through our partnerships with Buffalo's museums, churches, and collections of historical stained glass.

Finally, 2022 was the International Year of Glass (IYOG2022), which celebrated the essential role that glass has in society and brought together glass scientists, artists, technologists, glass art historians, advocates, ambassadors, and more. Thousands of events around the world convened to celebrate, explore, and educate, forging new relationships and collaborations. One example was the *Gathering: A Fusion of Glass Art and Science for Innovative Collaboration*, a group workshop sponsored by the SGAA Foundation and funded with help from IYOG2022 grant seed money. Through

the *Gathering* workshops, we seek to build an annual, international model to bring together artists and technologists, that is scientists and engineers, to openly collaborate, experiment with techniques, and build relationships that otherwise would not exist. Individually unique skill sets from across the glass industry will be combined over a period of years bringing those tools together in novel ways to freely explore issues that speak to the challenges of our world today. We hope that this amazing collaboration, which might have never existed without these collaborative efforts, will sow the seeds of evolution for our next 120 years! We invite you to join us in 2023 for our 120th birthday, as we continue to better the stained glass industry and invest in this incredible community for generations to come.

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Visit www.stainedglass.org to find more information on how to become a member or sponsor of SGAA.

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