

# WOMEN WORKING IN GLASS



LUCARTHA KOHLER



A Schiffer Art Book



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## Harriet Hyams

Stone, wood, and welded steel were the starting point of my career. When I discovered glass in the mid-sixties, I knew I'd come home: to a journey that would lead me to discoveries and adventures of all kinds.

Glass has taught me about myself and the world in the most unexpected ways. I try to make sense of the chaos and arrange and rearrange shapes and colors while exploring light to make windows that are beautiful and mysterious. I love to do this.

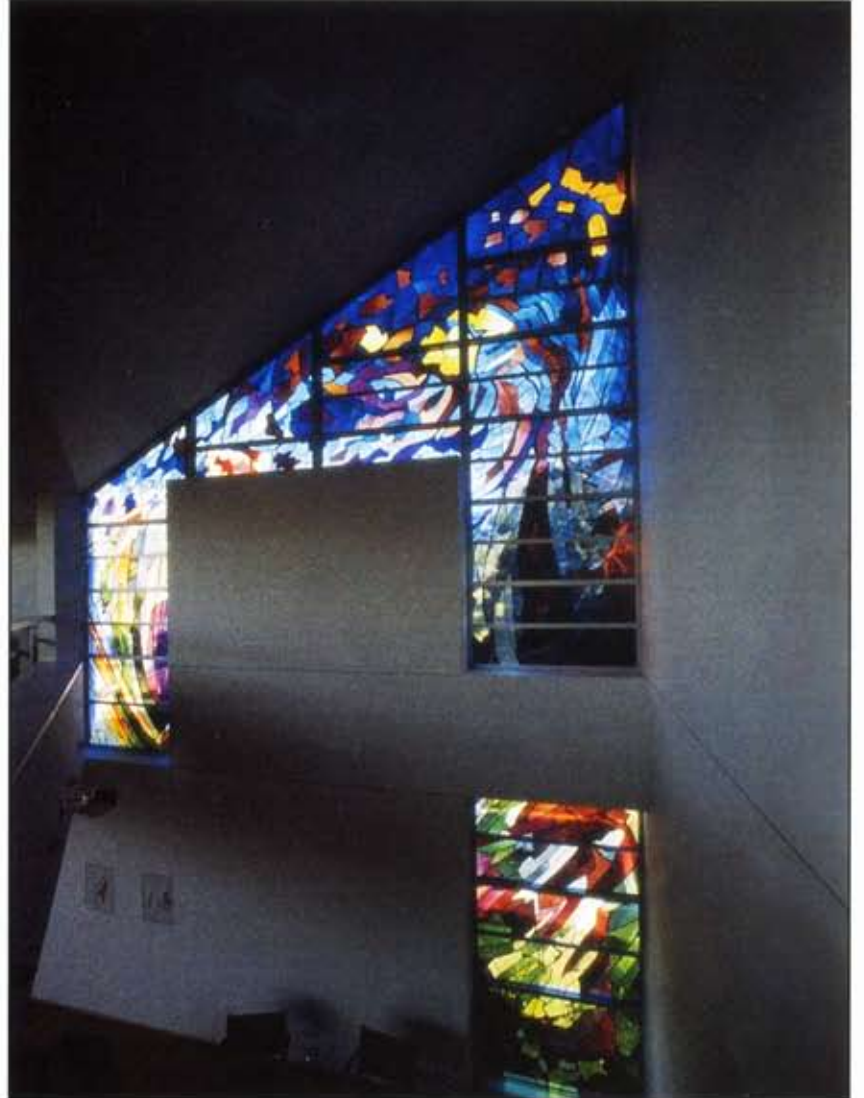


Harriet Hyams. Photo: Charles Shimmel.  
*Photography courtesy of the artist.*





*Perception*, 18" x 44",  
stained glass sculpture.  
Photograph courtesy of  
the artist.



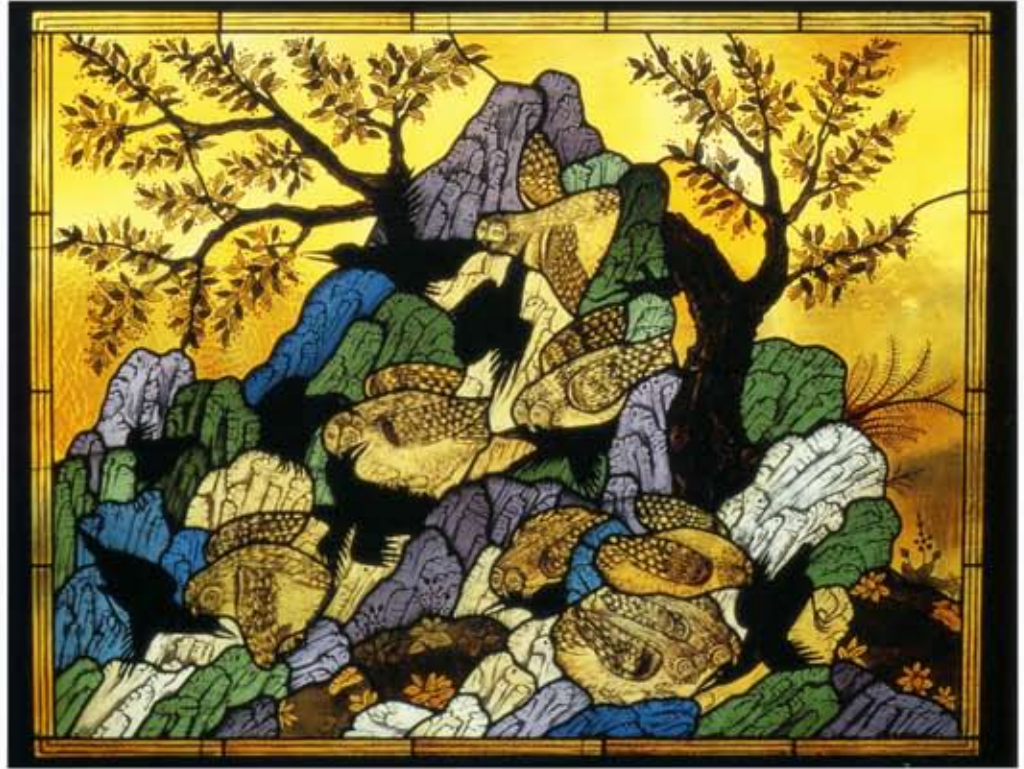
*Eucharist Window*, 2001, 29' x 20', Dominican Chapel, Our Lady of the Rosary, Sparkill, New York. Photo: Charles Shimel. Photograph courtesy of the artist.

Detail of *Eucharist Window*, 2001, 29' x 20', Dominican Chapel, Our Lady of the Rosary, Sparkill, New York. Photo: Charles Shimel. Photograph courtesy of the artist.



Before the 1970s, objects made from glass were often sold at Craft Fairs and specialty gift shops. A few galleries opened during this innovative decade just to exhibit glass art, including Heller Gallery, formerly Contemporary Art Glass Group, established by Douglas and Michael Heller in New York and Habatat Gallery in Michigan, by Ferdinand Hampson and Linda Boone. Fine craft galleries also began showing studio glass.

Prior to that, the sixties and seventies crafts revival brought back an interest in stained glass. Stained glass windows have been used to illuminate and educate in castles and cathedrals since the Middle Ages. Historically, women had been painting and staining glass, some women in the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries had even executed and leaded panels for windows. Cappy Thompson carries on the medieval tradition of painting glass today. Modern manufacturing practices for colored sheet glass and the copper foil method of assembly devised by Tiffany has brought about a renaissance of interest for women. Many warm and hot glass artists began by doing stained glass, but very few women stayed with it and grew to compete on an architectural scale. Harriet Hyams has been executing commercial and residential stained glass windows since the early 1970s. Penelope Comfort Starr began her training in stained glass in 1959 and executed many public and private commissions. Gradually, by the mid-1980s, her interest grew more three-dimensional and she began laminating plate glass to build structures. Elizabeth Mears began her career as a stained glass artist and moved on to become a successful lamp worker in the 1990s.



Cappy Thompson, *The Battle of the Crows and the Owls*, 1979, 46" x 61", painted stained glass. Photo: Jeremy Bigwood. Photograph courtesy of the artist.



Harriet Hyams, *Resurrection Windows*, 2001, 6' x 9' and 6' x 6', stained glass, Dominion Chapel, Our Lady of the Rosary, Sparkill, New York. Photograph courtesy of the artist.





Harriet Hyams, *Choir Windows*, 2001, 9' x 6' and 9' x 4', stained glass, Dominion Chapel, Our Lady of the Rosary, Sparkill, New York. *Photograph courtesy of the artist.*



Penelope Comfort Starr, *Magic Grapes*, 1967, 60" x 24", leaded glass, private residence, Washington, DC, photo: *House Beautiful*. *Photo courtesy of the artist.*



Penelope Comfort Starr, *Stairway Sculpture*, 1991, 4" x 4" x 48" plate glass set into a box balustrade, internally lit, private residence, San Francisco. *Photo courtesy of the artist.*

Penelope Comfort Starr, *Dining Table*, 2000, 29" x 54" d, plate glass, lighting, metal. *Photo courtesy of the artist.*

