

Ruskin Art Club

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www.RuskinArtClub.com

**Ruskin Art Club
(Founded 1888)**

200 S. Ave. 66,
Los Angeles, CA 90042
info@ruskinartclub.com
(310) 640-0710

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: GABRIEL MEYER

Dear members and friends of the Ruskin Art Club:

Until very recently, we were all savoring the satisfactions of a year of successful Ruskin bicentennial celebrations. You will find fine and judicious reports on several of these key events in this newsletter. You will also find a page celebrating the release of our colleague David Judson's new book, *Judson: Innovation in Stained Glass*, a history of the family of artisans who began crafting stained glass windows in Los Angeles in 1897. In addition to serving as president of the Judson Studios, David serves on the board of the Ruskin Art Club.

Starting with the Ruskin birthday concert at USC on February 15, 2019; culminating in the Huntington Library Conference "John Ruskin: 19th-century Visionary/21st-century Prophet" in mid-December, and ending with the provocative multidisciplinary conference at Notre Dame University, "John Ruskin: Prophet of the Anthropocene" in early February – it was a remarkable year in Mr. Ruskin's company and in the recognition of the prophetic importance of his thought to the multifaceted challenges of the 21st century.

Little did we suspect, even in early February, that one of those challenges would bring our world to a virtual stand-still, upending all our lives in a moment, and in ways we could hardly have imagined.

In each newsletter, beginning with this one, we hope to publish an original essay. We are especially honored to have Sara Atwood's remarkable piece, "Language, Loss, and "the things that lead to life," on the moment we are all living, in the shadow of Covid-19, and what Ruskin has to say to us in this difficult time.

Many years ago, I gave my first major talk on Ruskin, our fourth annual Ruskin Lecture, in the wake of the terrorist attacks of 9/11. I entitled the talk "Why We Need Ruskin," a kind of introduction to Ruskin with an argument for the vital importance of his prophetic wisdom to the issues of our day. The environment was still charged with the fear and uncertainty that had gripped the nation when I gave that talk. What I was led to focus on, as I wrapped up my remarks, fully conscious of the fraught moment we were living, was Ruskin's personal challenge to all of us to embrace life in its totality, even its terrors, to dedicate ourselves to being "souls that see clearly."

Sara's moving and perceptive essay comes to us at another moment of collective fear and uncertainty and, once more, underscores Ruskin as one of the great teachers of Life, of the things that matter.

--Gabriel

NEWSLETTER ESSAY:

"Language, Loss, and 'the things that lead to life'"

By Dr. Sara Atwood

During the past two academic terms, my students and I have spent a good deal of time reading, discussing, and writing about grief. I've created a syllabus for my introductory writing class centered on Helen Macdonald's memoir, *H is for Hawk*, the story of a bereaved daughter's effort

to train a goshawk in the wake of her father’s sudden death. Another narrative thread in this rich and multilayered book explores the life of T.H. White and his conflicted relationship with Gos, the bird at the center of his 1951 book *The Goshawk*. Other strands include nature, memory, and language. In addition to *Hawk*, I include readings that speak to the book’s themes: poetry (Dickinson, Tennyson, Arnold, Mary Oliver, Howard Nemerov, Carl Sandburg, Elizabeth Bishop, Wendell Berry, W.S. Merwin and others); memoir (including excerpts from work by Virginia Woolf, Eudora Welty, Hilary Mantel, and Penelope Lively); essays (Thoreau, Ruskin, Muir, Stegner, Annie Dillard, Robert Macfarlane); and short stories (Margaret Atwood, A.S. Byatt, Woolf).

The first time I taught this syllabus, I wondered whether my students might find it too “heavy”. Given the high incidence of anxiety and depression on college campuses, was I taking a risk in asking these young people to focus largely on grief and loss for ten weeks? On the other hand, I don’t believe in teaching anodyne classes in order to avoid discomfort or dissent; grief and loss are an inevitable part of life. I also felt that the works I’d included would ultimately have as much, if not more, to say about life as they do about death. *Media vita in morte sumus*, after all, (“in the midst of life we are in death”) and it is this awareness that gives life its urgency and beauty. “One is apt to forget all about life,” Virginia Woolf remarks in “The Death of the Moth,” “seeing it humped and bossed and garnished and cumbered”. Yet the moth’s death points up for Woolf the strangeness of life, how improbable it is that we should be here at all. Tennyson’s great poem of loss, “In Memoriam,” though occasioned by the death of Arthur Hallam, is nonetheless vibrantly, often wrenchingly, alive. A study of the deeply vital struggles of one man’s soul, the poem speaks to the universal human experience of grief, love, doubt, and faith. Though the poem was born of loss, it is about how to live. When Emily Dickinson writes about death or depression, it is her fierce energy that fascinates; she conveys grief so vividly because she is feverishly, dynamically alive. And although Helen Macdonald’s goshawk Mabel—“thirty ounces of death in a feathered jacket”—is driven by the instinct to kill, it is her vitality that helps heal Macdonald’s sorrow. There is no loss without life; we cannot talk, or write, about one without the other. Ultimately, all the works on my syllabus point to the truth of Ruskin’s maxim that “THERE IS NO WEALTH BUT LIFE.” This truth

has underscored our classroom discussions, even when—perhaps especially when—actual grief intruded, for some of us, upon its literary expression.

Over the course of three terms spent teaching versions of this syllabus, my students and I experienced significant personal loss—of loved ones, health, relationships, homes, and what we had thought of, naively, as certainties. Yet the works we read never intensified despair. This is not simply because we could “relate” to them—one can relate to a text or a tweet. Rather it has to do with craftsmanship and art. Ruskin’s reflection on Gothic architecture applies equally to language: “It is not enough that it has the Form, if it have not also the power and the life”. The language of these works about death and grief is alive, and it communicates something of that life to us. It is valuable in the Ruskinian sense of life-enhancing. “To be ‘valuable’, therefore,” Ruskin writes in *Unto This Last*, “is to ‘avail towards life.’ A truly valuable or availing thing is that which leads to life with its whole strength”.

Consider, for instance, the bittersweet, poignant beauty of W.S. Merwin’s “Rain Light”:

All day the stars watch from long ago
my mother said I am going now
when you are alone you will be all right
whether or not you know you will know
look at the old house in the dawn rain
all the flowers are forms of water
the sun reminds them through a white cloud
touches the patchwork spread on the hill
the washed colors of the afterlife
that lived there long before you were born
see how they wake without a question
even though the whole world is burning

Language, Loss, and “the things that lead to life” By Dr. Sara Atwood — Continued

The first four lines (lines I can't read without a catch in my throat) describe a quiet loss, or letting go. Subsequent lines evoke the deep time that transcends human existence and the turbulence of the present moment. Yet the poem is about connection rather than separation, endurance rather than despair. The speaker's mother, in departing, points to the continuity of time and nature, to a fundamental, elegant balance in which rain, cloud, and flowers are inextricably linked and interdependent, their persistence simultaneously mundane and miraculous: “see how they wake without a question/ even though the whole world is burning.” Merwin's language isn't complex or ornate; it's the very simplicity and familiarity of the concrete nouns—stars, house, rain, flowers, water, cloud, sun—that draw us into the poem and carry us beyond the concrete and knowable to the abstract ideas at the poem's heart. It's all beautifully, economically done—the poem has not only the form, but the power and the life.

Although we didn't know it, the winter term was moving inexorably towards a kind of unprecedented grief as the coronavirus pandemic gathered speed and intensity, fracturing the familiar world and demanding rapid adaptation to a frightening new reality. The final week of classes and exams were disrupted, instructors scrambling to make alternative arrangements, and the spring term will be conducted entirely online. Now communities across the world are on lockdown, trying to halt the spread of the virus through social distancing and quarantine. The news is relentlessly grim, with no clear end in sight. Yet in a culture routinely criticized for its solipsism and technology-driven isolation, what we miss the most turns out to be human connection. We want to sit and talk with our friends in a restaurant or pub, hike and shop together, attend classes full of real people in real classrooms, ride the crowded subway, stroll through a gallery, even sit through meetings in the same room as our colleagues. Although commentators (including myself) have decried our phones as agents of social dislocation, it turns out that we are far less dislocated than we had thought. In the present crisis, we are happy to use the technology that draws us together and approximates in-person interaction, but we spend most of our time on it longing for actual togetherness. Despite our divisive politics and soul-crushing economics, and although it feels as though we are living in the shadow of Ruskin's plague-cloud (“Blanched Sun,—blighted

grass,—blinded man”), it appears that deep down we agree with Ruskin that “The highest and first law of the universe – and the other name of life is, therefore, ‘help.’ The other name of death is ‘separation’”. What’s more, the pandemic requires that we live this law, acting not only in our own best interest, but in the interest of others; recognizing and protecting our interdependence and community.

Unsurprisingly, we are also turning hopefully toward “the things that lead to life,” literature prominent among them. This is not simply about escapism, although there is surely an element of it involved: witness the many lists of ‘contagion literature’ and frequent references to *The Decameron*, *Journal of the Plague Year*, *The Plague*, and *Station Eleven*, to name only a few. Like the works on my syllabus, the darkness of these books throws the mystery of life into relief. The hunger we have right now for language and story is a desire for insight into this mystery, conveyed by writers of vision in language both technically and imaginatively brilliant, language that startles and moves us. Confronting as we are a malign, invisible force, Tennyson’s indifferent, scornful Nature—“I care for nothing, all shall go”—seems frighteningly real, just as his bewildered questioning expresses our own sometimes faltering faith. In the present “Hour of Lead” we feel, with Dickinson, the Soul’s bandaged moments and struggle to nurture the thing with feathers. We hope, with Macdonald, that “perhaps the bareness and wrongness of the world [is] an illusion; that things might still be real, and right, and beautiful, even if [we] cannot see them”.

As I have said elsewhere, language binds us to the world in profound and lasting ways; we cannot touch words, nor do we make them with our hands, yet we use them to give shape and form to reality. Words will not stop the unfolding disaster, but words matter. They are the material from which we build our world—and, in times like these, reconstruct and sustain it.

Dr. Sara Atwood is co-director of the Guild of St. George in North America and a member of the Ruskin Art Club board of directors. She teaches at Portland Community College in Portland, Oregon.

Report on the Roycroft Conference

September 13-14, 2019 / The Roycroft Campus Visitor Center / East Aurora, New York

by Gabriel Meyer

When the average American thinks of the historic Arts and Crafts movement, it's Craftsman bungalows or Stickley chairs that likely come to mind – at best. But there is a great more to this supremely influential nineteenth-century movement of design than furniture, wainscoting, and wallpaper. Last September's conference on "John Ruskin and the Beginnings of the Arts and Crafts Movement," held September 13-14 on the Roycroft Campus in East Aurora, New York, and co-sponsored by the Guild of St. George in North America and the Roycroft Print Shop, aimed to correct such misapprehensions by focusing on the ideas, the vision of life that inspired the movement in the first place.

The conventional view would situate the origins of Arts and Crafts with the Victorian polymath William Morris and formation of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society in 1887. But, in fact, another and even greater Victorian polymath, John Ruskin, was the real animating source behind the movement, undergirding Morris's own efforts to create timeless beauty in the midst of the injustice and squalor of industrial society.

The setting of this conference was both unique and uniquely apt. The conference took place on the historic Roycroft campus, once the heart of the Roycroft community, an influential colony of printers, furniture makers, metal and leather smiths, bookbinders and artists founded by Elbert Hubbard in 1895 along strongly Morrisian and Ruskinian lines. Nine of the fourteen original Roycroft buildings which constitute the campus were awarded National Landmark Status in 1986. A Ruskin quote provided the Roycrofter creed and, not incidentally, a kind of subtext for the conference itself: "Working with the head, hand, and heart, and mixing enough play with work so that every task is pleasurable, makes for health and happiness."

Report on the Roycroft Conference by Gabriel Meyer— Continued

Prof. James Spates, an emeritus professor of sociology from Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, NY, and a noted Ruskin scholar, sounded the theme of the conference in a lecture that stressed the roots of the Arts and Crafts impulse in Ruskin's vision of an integrated aesthetics and organic social relations anchored in meaningful work, community, and cooperation. Prof. Spates stressed the profound influence Ruskin's "The Nature of Gothic," part of his larger 1853 work *The Stones of Venice*, had on William Morris and on the shape of his subsequent interests – an influence celebrated in Morris's famous Kelmscott Press edition of the essay.

Subsequent presentations provided reflections on individual facets of Ruskin's legacy. Roycroft Renaissance Artisan in Photography, Peter Potter, delved into the emergence and influence of early daguerreotype photography on Ruskin himself and on the Arts and Crafts movement. In addition to samples of his own evocative photography, Potter's presentation highlighted the remarkable cache of daguerreotypes taken by Ruskin and his servants in the middle of the 19th century which were discovered in 2006 by Ken and Jenny Jacobson and form the subject of their subsequent book, *Carrying Off the Palaces: John Ruskin's Lost Daguerreotypes*.

Paul Dawson, chair of The Friends of Ruskin's Brantwood and the editor of the organization's newsletter, described the remarkable and enduring relationship between Ruskin and his publisher George Allen (1831-1907). A skilled joiner and furniture maker, Allen became one of Ruskin's drawing students at the London Working Men's College, after which he mastered engraving under Ruskin's tutelage. In 1871, Ruskin decided to set up a publishing house of his own, an enterprise he entrusted to the ever-loyal and versatile Allen. Eventually, George Allen and Sons boasted London offices and a general interest catalog, although Ruskin's works remained central to the firm's output, with the fabled Library Edition of Ruskin's Complete Works in 39 volumes, issued between 1903 and 1911, the publisher's masterpiece. Dawson also included reflections on Ruskin and Morris's notions about elements of book production and the emergence of the private press movement, a signal inspiration for Roycroft's own publishing enterprise in the early years of the 20th century.

Report on the Roycroft Conference by Gabriel Meyer— Continued

Finally, the conference was brought up to date and down to earth, so to speak, with Kay Walter's lively presentation on teaching Ruskin to students in rural Arkansas. A professor of English at the University of Arkansas at Monticello, Walters described how she has integrated Ruskinian principles into the regular course work of her students, often from underserved communities, and with remarkable and life-changing results. Walters' presentation not only demonstrated ways to effectively communicate Ruskin's ideas to contemporary young people, but proved an effective testimony in its own right to Ruskin's humanist philosophy of education with its focus on the empowering of human capacities for wonder, insight, and empathy.

Conference attendees, which included locals as well as registrants from Pennsylvania, Arkansas, and California, were treated to a guided tour of the renovated Roycroft Print Shop, under printer Joe Weber's direction, which now boasts some of Hubbard's original presses and is once again publishing (and illuminating) booklets in the classic Roycroft style.

A stimulating conference hosted by a historic Arts and Crafts community in the midst of a 21st century revival – what could be better, and more promising than that?

Gabriel Meyer is the Executive Director of the Ruskin Art Club in Los Angeles



The Borglum Bronze of Ruskin, donated by the Ruskin Art Club, to the Brantwood Estate, 2019.

Many of you know that we launched an international fundraising campaign last year to purchase this 1903 bronze of Ruskin by the American sculptor Gutzon Borglum. Thanks to your generosity, we were able to make the purchase and donate the work to Ruskin's estate at Brantwood in the Lake Country on behalf of American Ruskinians in the bicentennial year. The Borglum bronze is now on permanent display in the drawing room of Brantwood. -- Editor

Report on the Huntington Library Conference

December 13-14, 2019: John Ruskin: 19th-Century Visionary, 21st-Century Inspiration

A View from the Back Row

By Anne Petach

For both substance and style, the December 2019 Huntington Library Conference: “John Ruskin: 19th-Century Visionary, 21st-Century Inspiration,” hit all the right notes. Atmosphere is perhaps a better term than style for the general “feel” of a conference. The best ensures that attendees are relaxed and receptive, not on edge, mildly frustrated, or defensive. This conference was permeated with a sense of confident, relaxed energy and tempered forward movement.

This was surely the result of outstandingly cordial collaboration behind the scenes between the Huntington Library as generous host and sponsor, and co-sponsors, the Ruskin Art Club (US) and the Guild of St. George (UK) as well as the incipient Guild in North America. A spirit of easy collaboration between the speakers was evident throughout, as well as between speakers and conference attendees during the breaks between sessions. There was no sense of grand-standing, standing on reputation, ego-promoting or defending of turf. They did Ruskin proud, amply demonstrating the cooperation he urged as preferable to competition.



Musical performance of Ruskin's "The King of the Golden River" by The Felix Quartet with tenor Drake Dantzler.

The presentations, the substance of the conference, were grouped in themed morning and afternoon sessions, which gave the conference a gentle touch of unity. In addition, many talks complemented

one or more of the others, regardless of session grouping, a serendipitous, unplanned touch, gave the unity an organic feel.

Each presentation proved informative and scholarly without being abstruse, accessible even to the many in the audience who seemed intensely interested, but who, if my random conversations in the lobby were indicative, were only in the beginning stages of appreciating Ruskin. With one exception, all the presentations were profusely illustrated, for some the illustrations were so integral as to be essential for understanding.



Speakers at the Huntington Library Conference

Presentations included: James Spates (“Why Ruskin: A Radical and Humane Visionary”); Sara Atwood (“‘The Things that Lead to Life’: Ruskin as Educator”); Dinah Birch (“Ruskin and Women: A New Appraisal”); Emma Sdegno (“Ruskin and the Language of Culture: Framing His Notions of Gothic and Renaissance”); Gray Brechin (“‘Necessitous Men Are Not Free Men’: Ruskin, the New Deal, and the Settlement House Movement”); Sandra Kemp (“Ruskin: The Museum of the Near Future”); Gabriel Meyer (“Ruskin and the California Dream”); Ted Bosley (“The House Beautiful: Truth to Nature in the Work of Greene and Greene”); David Judson (“Ruskin and Stained Glass: A Century of Creative Work”); Kateri Ewing (“Learning to Draw from Ruskin”); Rachel Dickinson (“The Guild of St. George: Then and Now”); and Howard Hull (“Ruskin in the 21st Century”).

A handout listing “further resources” would have been useful to many of the attendees. A related exhibit, “John Ruskin and His ‘Frenemies,’” of drawings from the Huntington’s collection, was in a gallery across the Gardens at some distance from the conference site. I returned another day to enjoy it.

Although the Huntington Library has an extensive collection of Ruskin manuscripts and letters, these are rarely on public view, though available for study to scholars accredited to the Library. A special feature of the conference was the performance of Ruskin’s “The King of the Golden River,” a composition for tenor and string quartet, based on Ruskin’s children’s story, composed by British composer Sarah Rodgers, beautifully performed by tenor Drake Dantzler and The Felix Quartet in the Huntington’s acoustically outstanding Rothenberg Auditorium. The “Ruskin in California” session of the conference will, hopefully, be developed into a separate program for a wider California audience at a not-too distant time.

Audio recordings of the talks are at: <https://www.huntington.org/videos-recorded-programs/john-ruskin>. The video recordings have been delayed by the coronavirus outbreak. For the talks that depend most heavily on illustrations, listeners will do well to check relevant websites for at least a flavor of what they presented. E.g.:

- Sandra Kemp: the new Ruskin Library and the Library of the Near Future at Lancaster University (UK). (View first) <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/the-ruskin/>
- David Judson: For a general idea of the fused glass he describes in relation to Ruskin’s principle of “truth to materials,” see <https://judsonstudios.com/>
- Kateri Ewing: Influenced by Ruskin to learn to draw; see what it led to: (after audio)
- <https://www.kateriewing.com>
- Howard Hull: Brantford, Ruskin’s home (UK) now preserved. (View first). <http://www.brantwood.org.uk/>

Anne Petach is a Life Member of the Ruskin Art Club.

“John Ruskin: Prophet of the Anthropocene”

The University of Notre Dame / South Bend, Indiana / February 7-8, 2020

by Jim Spates

Coordinated by Professor Robert Goulding (recently elected to Companion status in The Guild of St. George) and his colleague, Sara Maurer, this fine conference, the first ever to be held in this part of North America, was the last to convene before the current coronavirus crisis which, of late, has kept so many of us at home and away from other such stimulating and convivial gatherings.

In this capacity as “the last conference for a while,” although none of us knew of that special status at the time, it proved a tremendous success. For years, Professor Goulding has been a great admirer of Ruskin and his works; and so it was with the idea of promulgating the importance of both the man and his writings in the American Mid-West that he designed this gathering. Its theme recognized Ruskin as a harbinger of a new era in history, already known as the Anthropocene, a period wherein the impact of humanity on the planet has been so powerful it has shifted us into a new geologic era.

One of the brilliant strokes of the event was to intermingle scholars who were new to Ruskin (most of whom were young) with others who have been thinking and writing about him (most of whom were considerably less young) for many years. The approach, which unfolded over two days chockablock with no less than six panels featuring four speakers each, and two evening Keynote Sessions, not only produced an extremely novel mix of papers, but allowed a unique chance for these “generations” of Ruskin aficionados to mix and exchange ideas, thereby setting the stage for new collaborations in the future. To suggest a flavor of the special quality of the whole, I provide a (somewhat truncated) listing of the greatly varied presentations, beginning first with those of the newer Ruskin scholars:

Sara Maurer (University of Notre Dame) spoke on “The Evidence of Ruskin’s ‘Storm-Cloud of the

“John Ruskin: Prophet of the Anthropocene” by Jim Spates— Continued

19th Century”]; followed by Henry Weinfield (also, University of Notre Dame) who reported on “Ruskin, Wordsworth, and the Pathetic Fallacy.” In a second session, Fredrik Albritton Jonsson’s (University of Chicago) talk moved us into geological considerations with “Ruskin in Energy History,” his lecture being followed by Amy Woodson-Boulton’s (Loyola Marymount University) “John Ruskin and the Green New Deal, or, a Brief History of Zombies, Gothic Architecture, and The Great Recession” Later that same day, came Deanna K. Kreisel’s (University of Mississippi), “Ruskin’s Trash,” and Eugene McCarraher’s (Villanova University), “The Real Science of Political Economy: John Ruskin and Economics after Neoliberalism.” On the next day, Saturday, an early talk by Rachel Teukolsky (Vanderbilt University), “Ruskin’s Media: Technologies of the Gothic,” brought us into the modern era, while another, Laura Dassow Wells’ (University of Notre Dame), “He who shoots at Beauty: Thoreau on the Wings of Ruskin,” took us back into the nineteenth century. A later session that day included fine talks by Jeremy Melius (Tufts University) on “Ruskin’s Touch,” a study of his remarkably close attention to the worker-liberating aspects of medieval sculpture, this followed by Siobhan Carroll’s (University of Delaware), “Ruskin and the Disposition of Clouds.” (Throughout, Ruskin’s “Storm-Cloud” lecture would appear and re-appear, always being cited as a prescient portent of our troubled modern days.)

Interspersed with these enterprising talks were some offered by more experienced Ruskin scholars: Sharon Arnovsky Weltman (Louisiana State University), spoke on “Ethics of the Golden Dustman: Ruskin, Crystal Life, and Dickens’ ‘Our Mutual Friend,’” Sandra Kemp (The Ruskin Museum of the Near Future), on “Ruskin and the Insolence of Science,” David Craig (Indiana University), on “Are Carbon Taxes Impious?”, while Jim Spates (Hobart and William Smith Colleges) returned us to some basics with “Ruskin and Art: An Introduction to his Theory of Aesthetics.”

The conference’s full daily schedule was capped by not one but two Keynote addresses, both of which were introduced by Professor Goulding: on Friday night, Howard Hull, The Curator of Brantwood, provided a visual excursion of the glorious grounds of Ruskin’s former home in a talk he entitled, “The Brantwood Parables: John Ruskin’s Living Laboratory,” and, to end the festivities,

“John Ruskin: Prophet of the Anthropocene” by Jim Spates— Contined

on Saturday night, the evening of Ruskin’s birthday, Clive Wilmer, Master of the Guild of St. George, gave a marvelous overview talk, “Ruskin’s Guild of St. George, Yesterday and To-Day.” Fine dinners and toasts, of course, brought each day’s sessions to a close, and, when all was over, the usual goodbyes were clearly little tinged by a sense that a very special gathering had just completed.

For making all this happen, kudos, accompanied by stentorian applause, must be accorded to Robert Goulding and Sara Maurer, not merely for having the vision of such a marvelous conference, but for making it happen, overall, a superb Ruskinian welcome to our new era, the Anthropocene.

Prof. Jim Spates is professor emeritus of sociology at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, New York. He is currently writing a study of Ruskin’s seminal work on political economy, Unto This Last.

JUDSON: Innovation in Stained Glass

Illuminates 120+ Year History of L.A.

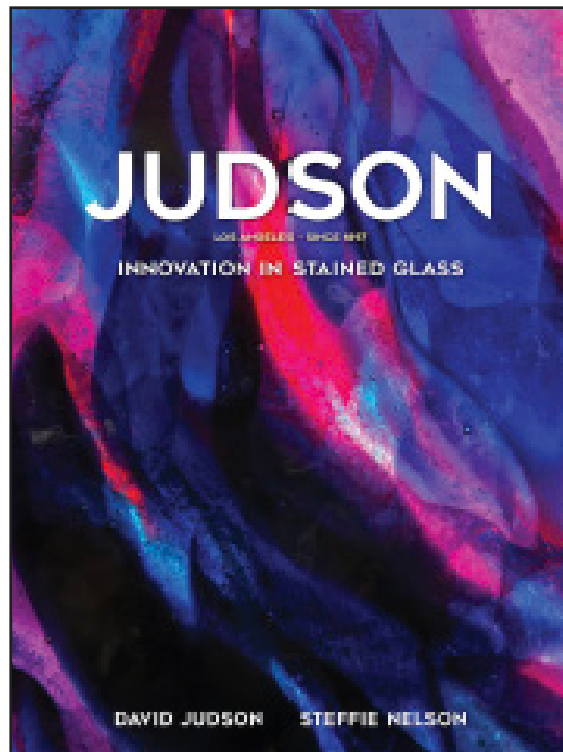
Stained Glassmakers Judson Studios

New book chronicles five generations of family artisans and hundreds of astonishing windows throughout the world

“Work with stained glass in nearly any form is one of the most soul-satisfying vocations or avocations in the world...

The joy of capturing living light is yours.”

—Walter W. Judson, 1972



Hidden away from the bustle of Los Angeles sits the Craftsman-era home of Judson Studios, the legendary family of artisans who began handcrafting stained glass windows in 1897. Today, Judson Studios and Angel City Press are happy to celebrate the release of *JUDSON: Innovation*

in *Stained Glass*, the first book of its kind to chronicle this remarkable five-generation history. From the earliest days of the studio, during the Arts and Crafts Movement to the newly refined fused stained glass used in today's contemporary buildings, Judson Studios has been recognized internationally as among the world's finest stained glass artistry.



Representing both its rich past and pioneering future, Judson's seminal projects – including places of worship and contemplation, cemeteries and mausoleums, libraries, universities, hotels, hospitals, historic homes, restaurants, theaters, airports, casinos, resorts, country clubs, monuments, museums, Los Angeles landmarks, and more – is showcased through more than 300 original color images in the pages of *JUDSON*.

“Glass has maintained its relevance over time because it reflects contemporary society; what remains unchanged is the pure, visceral impact of color and light through stained glass. The unmatched beauty and authenticity of the material has resonated deep within us for centuries, and it will continue to do so, whether the setting is sacred or secular, public or private,” said the book's author and fifth generation Judson Studios president David Judson. “In the process of writing this book, understanding the history of our company and separating family lore from fact became an exercise in developing a vision for the future.”

Co-authored with writer Steffie Nelson, *JUDSON* showcases the vibrant history of the family, beginning with William Lees Judson, a plein-air painter who migrated to Los Angeles in 1893. He found his way to the tiny Arroyo community of Garvanza, nestled between the borders of Los Angeles and Pasadena, and quickly became involved in the arts community that had gravitated to the area. By 1895, Judson was dean of the School of Fine Arts at the University of Southern

California. And by 1906, his son Walter had founded the first Judson studio bearing the family name, W.H. Judson Art Glass Company.

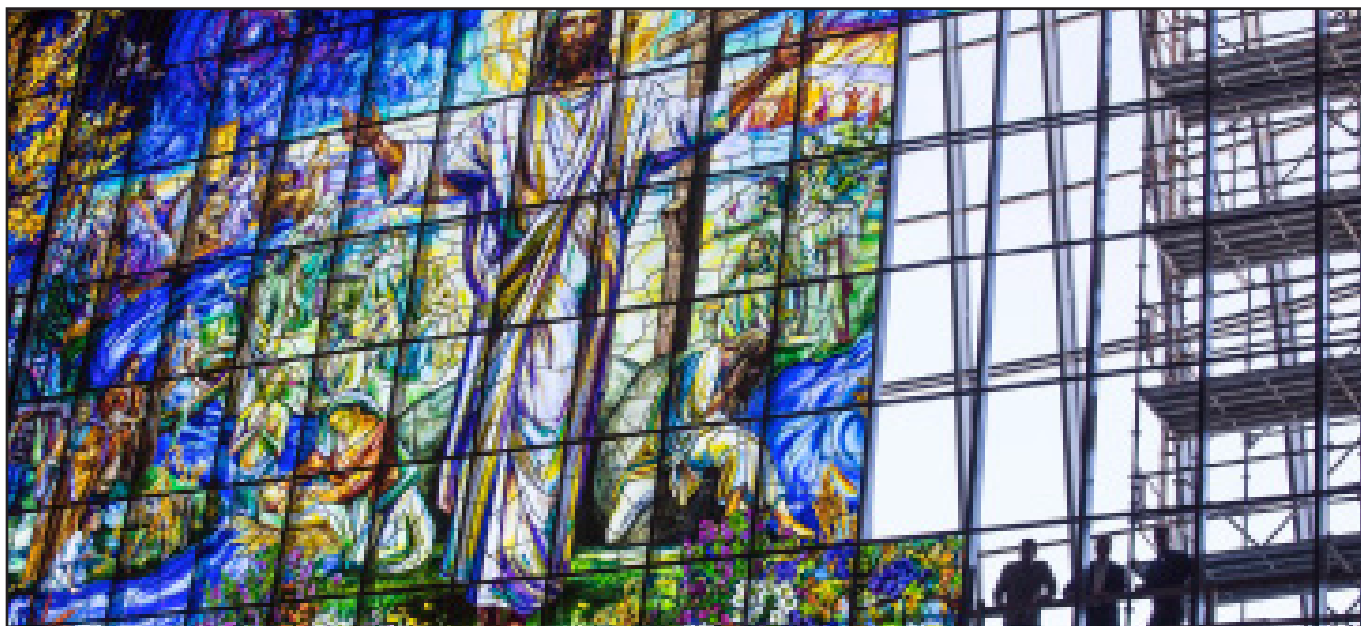
From the patriarch's original Craftsman-era home and studio (named a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument in 1969), five generations of Judsons have now worked with artists, architects, and designers to create Old World-style stained glass whose quality and craftsmanship have often been compared to the work of Louis Comfort Tiffany. Though famed for its Craftsman glass, Judson has become world-renowned for its innovations in stained glass art and technology, drawing the attention of experts and lighting the way to the field's future.

In one of its chapters, *JUDSON* tells the story of how Frank Lloyd Wright tapped Judson Studios in the 1920s to execute his designs for the subtly colored windows at Hollyhock House, the architect's most famous structure in Los Angeles, which was recently named a UNESCO World Heritage site. Nearly a century after they were created, the windows were also meticulously restored by Judson glassmakers.



Much of Judson's finest work has been installed in religious buildings of various denominations. *JUDSON* illustrates the studio's fine work in churches dating back to the early 20th century, as well as more recent works, including the extraordinarily modern Air Force Academy Cadet Chapel in Colorado Springs, completed in 1962, whose soaring panels of color introduced an architecturally mesmerizing approach to stained glass that had never been executed before. Judson's restoration work at Los Angeles' famed Wilshire Boulevard Temple has been called nothing short of extraordinary.

The new book also details how, in 2018, Judson created the world's largest fused glass window for the Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kansas. Including 161 panels, and measuring more than 3,400 square feet of art glass, the Resurrection Window made news throughout the world, intriguing congregants and tourists alike with its precision detail and artful melding of colors in a mural that depicted both sacred and secular stories.



Once Judson Studios developed methods for blending subtle variations of color in glass for the Church of the Resurrection project, the possibilities of glass as an artist's medium were made increasingly apparent. Now, in addition to its work in traditional leaded stained glass, the book explains how Judson Studios is working with fine artists to create effects in glass that have never before been achievable. Most recently translating fine art into glass, the studios worked with artist Sarah Cain to create her 10-by-150-foot work *We Will Walk Right Up To The Sun* installed in the Airtrain terminal of San Francisco International Airport, and unveiled in Sept. 2019.

“Today, having built the only major fusing studio in the world in 2016, there is an excitement building up again in the world of stained glass. While traditional work remains the foundation of Judson Studio, the fusing capabilities represent the future of the medium,” said Judson. “We have only scratched the surface of what can be done and we are just beginning a new era in the art of stained glass.”



JUDSON: Innovation in Stained Glass
By David Judson and Steffie Nelson
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David Judson is president of Judson Studios, the fifth generation of the Judson family to lead the studio since it was founded in 1897. David oversees the studio's creative process, where he works with architects, designers, and artists who turn to Judson for its legendary work in stained glass. In 2015, he opened the second Judson Studios facility which incorporates the firm's innovative fusing technology that allows fine artists to express their vision in glass. David is the president of the Stained Glass Association of America (SGAA) and lives with his family in Pasadena, California. **Steffie Nelson** has covered art, design, and culture for The New York Times, Los Angeles Times, W Magazine, and others.

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