

From the Editor's Desk:

The Smart Race

In an age of smart cars and smart solutions for sustainable building, it seems that everyone is out to raise the level of smart and introduce the next great smart product. I am happy to be able to report that the Stained Glass Association of America is active in the smart race.

SGAA staff recently attended the AIA trade show, which was held this year in Boston. Our purpose in attending this trade show is to distribute the *Sourcebook* and promote the use of architectural stained and art glass in new building projects, the proper restoration and preservation of existing installations, and the hiring of SGAA members in these building projects. Our booth was simple, clean, and, in the words of one architect, "smart."

His was not the only comment on the design and content of the booth. What made it remarkable was that he was not looking for stained glass. He was simply walking down the aisle toward a booth that sold aluminum facade. Yet our booth caught his eye, made him stop, and impressed him enough that he nodded in appreciation and said, "Smart booth."

He also took a *Sourcebook* CD, because — after all — that's a smart way to publish something like the *Sourcebook*. You can bet if he finds himself with a building project that calls for stained or architectural art glass, he will use his *Sourcebook* to find an SGAA member to design and fabricate it for him, because they belong to a smart organization.

The *Sourcebook* is an annual publication produced by the Stained Glass Association of America to promote architectural stained and art glass to architects, building committees, planners, and anyone else involved in a building project or restoration. It features articles on finding



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and working with a studio; Portfolio Presentation Pages, which are open to all categories of Accredited membership; a complete SGAA membership directory list, and other valuable tools needed by those commissioning art glass. The *Sourcebook* is published every year in print, in an expanded CD-ROM edition, and on the Internet at www.SGAAOnline.com. It's a smart publication to be seen in, and all SGAA members are encouraged to participate.

The purpose of the *Sourcebook* is to expand the share of the building market that goes to stained and architectural art glass. It is also to insure that this expanding market benefits the members of the Stained Glass Association of America.

The primary objection against participation in the *Sourcebook* seems to be the belief that, by participating, a given studio is also helping to promote its competition. However, this objection is valid only in a stagnant market.

We live in an age of instant communication and easy access to vast stores of information. Almost all stained glass studios have a web presence and are working to promote their business. It

is naive to think there is any possible way that a given client might not suspect that there are other stained glass studios in business.

Instead of hoping in vain that it might somehow be possible to keep the existence of competing studios a secret from potential clients, the smart thing to do is to join in with the forward-thinking members of the Stained Glass Association of America, whose participation in SGAA programs like the *Sourcebook* are a participation in the future of the architectural glass arts. By working to expand the market, all will benefit.

Yes, this will certainly mean that sometimes a potential job might go to a competing studio; however, in a market that has an ever-increasing number of commissions available, there will always be an ever-expanding number of jobs for everyone. If the choice is between a small percent of a few jobs or a small percent of a lot of jobs, it is clear which is the better choice.

The Stained Glass Association of America will continue to implement programs designed to benefit the craft and increase the share of the building market enjoyed by the glass arts. This is good for our membership, and it is good for the craft itself. More and more architects will come to appreciate how smart this is, and, when it is time for them to commission architectural art glass, they will look for the smart studios: the ones playing an active role in the future of stained and architectural art glass by their participation in the Stained Glass Association of America.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Gross".