



# Tempe Public Art

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## Laurie Nessel

*Window to the Past*, 1995

Leaded glass including: float glass,  
photo silk-screened glass,  
and hand-blown glass

### Location:

Tempe History Museum  
809 E Southern Avenue

### Artist Website:

[www.LaurieNessel.com](http://www.LaurieNessel.com)

**Description:** Using 120 square feet of glass, 45 pounds of lead and six pounds of solder, Nessel created *Window to the Past*, a 10x11 foot leaded glass window that commemorates Tempe's past. This artwork features 11 historical images from the Tempe History Museum's archives that are photo-silkscreened onto clear glass panels. Along with the photographs, Nessel, a Tempe glass artist, incorporated clear antique glass, hand blown glass and stained glass in a design of flowing blue lines representing Tempe's Salt River and flowing brown lines referring to Hayden Butte. Within this matrix, Nessel scattered cast opalescent glass jewels to visually bind the composition. Nessel strives to create glass pieces that will modulate light in a variety of beautiful ways. The imagery in *Window to the Past* includes historical photographs of Ash Avenue Bridge (1914), City Hall (1914), Territorial Normal School (1886), Tempe Commercial Company (1918), Hayden Flour Mill (1874), Horse and Buggy at Hayden Butte (1900), Pafford House (1910), Arizona Mercantile (1900), Hayden's Ferry (1887), Threshers (1920) and the Train Depot (1915). The work was relocated to the lobby of the renovated Tempe History Museum in 2010.

**Artist biography:** Nessel received a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1978 from the University of Wisconsin–River Falls where she studied glassblowing and fibers. She studied under Roger Darricariere in Chartres, France before opening her Tempe studio in 1983. Through her business, Gecko Glass, Nessel creates artworks primarily through commissions for use in residential construction, making quatrefoil windows, kitchen cabinets, doors, transoms and skylights. "Window of the Past" was Nessel's first public art commission.

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