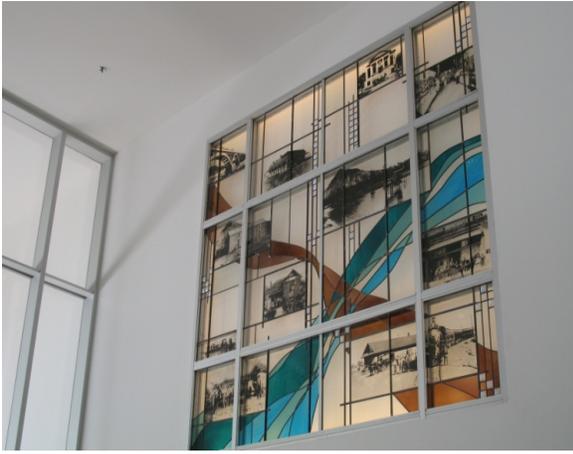




# Tempe Public Art

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## *Window to the Past*

Laurie Nessel

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

1995

**Location:** Tempe History Museum  
809 E. Southern Ave.

**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 10- x 11-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. "I am drawn to historical photographs. ...incorporating them into my glass windows...creates layers of memory and meaning as we look outside and view our current world through images of the past," she said about the piece. 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 her Bachelor of Arts degree in 1978 from 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.

**Funding:** This project was funded through the city of Tempe Municipal Arts Fund and administered through the Tempe Municipal Arts Commission.