Inward Looking
Glass Stars in Interior Applications

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Glass stars in interior applications
Yes, architectural glass has made its mark on the exterior of many buildings. The glass curtainwall has become the most popular design construction of the day.

But it’s not just outside that glass supplies the design answer. Increasingly, glass is being used for design solutions inside those gleaming structures as well.

From new technologies that allow a glass wall to let in light or be opaque for privacy to decorative glasses and silkscreening which gives focus and uniqueness to a space, architects and designers have been utilizing architectural glass in innovative ways. Here are some examples.

**Courting Design**

The new U.S. Courthouse in Seattle is a 20-story building located on an 8,400 square meter (approximately 2-acre) site in downtown Seattle. The facility houses the U.S. District Court, Western Division of Washington, and other
This non-reflective low-iron glass highly transparent curtain wall symbolizes public visibility and access to the judicial process.

court-related agencies.

It features a striking design that has been an award winner. The architectural firm NBBJ, Seattle, has been awarded for its work on the structure with three General Services Administration (GSA) Design and Construction Excellence Awards.

The firm's philosophy is to begin each project by asking the critical questions that get to the heart of civic life: How can a federal office building retain a sense of identity while integrating with a community? How does a design help government and cultural institutions serve
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a truly civic purpose, engaging our citizens?
In the case of this particular project, the answers to those questions involved glass both outside and inside. On the outside, its highly transparent curtainwall, made of non-reflective low iron glass, is symbolic of public visibility and access to the judicial process.

On the inside, the facility has an interesting interior design in its lobby which utilizes decorative glass as a key element.

The glass was used effectively as dividing walls in the main lobby as well as in decorative screen panels in the ceiling of the lobby. There is a total of 3,000 square feet of ¼-inch acid etched clear glass, opaque on one face, tempered and laminated Textures glass from Walker Glass Co. Ltd.

The main entrance is surrounded by a wall of glass and several thick pillars, creating a sense of open space. The acid-etched glass creates a translucent satin appearance which obscured the view while maintaining a high level of light transmittance which contributes to the feeling of openness.

Open and Shut Case

Unical Aviation Inc., Irwindale, Calif., wanted to be able to let the light into three conference rooms for an open feeling yet be able to have the same walls offer privacy when necessary.

Paul Hui, who was director of business development with the company two years ago when the work was done, explained that the three conference rooms share common walls (the first and the second and the second and the third) so that when the glass walls are clear there is unobstructed vision through the three rooms.

However, using Polyvision electrically switchable glass on the shared walls means there can be privacy in the individual conference rooms when the privacy wall is activated.

The project consists of 28 of the glass panels, including the lites for doors which have holes in them for the handles.

The panels can be transformed from a cloudy white translucent barrier to an optically clear state through an electrical switch. The panels are produced by laminating polymer-dispersed liquid crystal film with architectural grade PVB between two layers of glass.

For Unical Aviation, which designed the conference rooms in-house, the capabilities of the glass panels provided the design solution it needed.

Fun Follows Function

The E-Quad Café, which opened at Princeton University in September 2005, features the kind of fun design that its university student users find interesting. A clear tempered silk-screen pattern of stripes on ¼-inch glass are bonded to a ¼-inch clear panel, then another ¼-inch panel is painted with color-matched stripes of each paint offsetting those silk-screened on the first panel. This makes the stripes line up in such a way that the wall is opaque when viewed directly, but the glass is transparent when the wall is viewed obliquely. It’s fun and functional, providing visual interest and a physical screen to the serving area without diminishing the natural light.

Project architect Alexander Katrecko, of Pei Cobb Freed & Partners, used Montage glass from Oldcastle Glass for the facility. “When our project budget steered us away from using curved glass, we had to accept that our Café Service glass enclosure would be faceted. The pattern of glass we selected, acid etching on both sides of the glass in staggered alignment, enhances the faceted reality of the Service by creating differing effects and degrees of transparency as one’s gaze moves around and through the space.”

Katrecko makes an interesting point about the use of a domestic supplier for the glass. “We usually turn to specialty glass companies from Europe, but cost and delivery can be problems. Oldcastle Glass was able to fabricate our specialty design and deliver it to meet our tight schedule.” AG

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"Your Domestic Source for acid-etched glass and mirror"

Service Advantages

- Domestic manufacture
- 60 years of experience in glass products manufacturing
- ISO 9002 Quality controlled
- Short lead times
- LTL shipments
- Local technical and sales support
- Storé or case packaging
- Boom truck or common carrier deliveries
- Sizes up to 96"x144"
- North American float glass substrates

Applications

- Interior partitions
- Doors (interior and exterior)
- Flooring and stairs
- Balustrades
- Spandrel
- Sealed units
- Shower and bath enclosures
- Mirror doors
- Backsplashes
- Furniture components
- Shelving
- Kitchen components (cabinetry)
- Wall decoration

Product Advantages

- Consistent finish and appearance
- Maintenance free
- More mar-resistant than sandblasted glass
- Does not peel or discolor like films
- Does not scratch off like coatings
- Available in wide variety of thickness, tints and finishes
- Two different substrates (glass and mirror)
- Featuring Starphire® ultra-clear glass, by PPG in glass or mirror
- Two-sided application on glass also available

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