

Members' news

New Fellow: Tom Denny

St Christopher, Warden Hill: 'The Good Shepherd'



Thomas Denny, stained-glass artist and painter, studied at Edinburgh College of Art in the 1970s, after which for the next two decades he mainly, exhibited his paintings in London and New York. More recently, he has concentrated on stained glass, making some 50 ecclesiastical windows, mostly in England but some in Germany and Scotland. BSMGP members at the 2013 conference in Gloucestershire-Worcestershire may recall his talk at the 1960s church of St Christopher, Warden Hill, Cheltenham, on his set of 10 windows there, made between 1985 and 1995, which depict Christ's parables (see above) and which

he said summarized his journey in glass since college – at first using much Hartley Woods; then moving to intense reds, acid etching and stain to 'draw the light in'; and finally using much plated flashed glass; over that decade, his leading and shapes also evolved from angular to circular forms.

Other commissions in the area include a blue triple window at Gloucester Cathedral, commissioned in 1989 to mark the 900th anniversary of the laying of its foundation stone, and the Ivor Gurney window (2013, below) in honour of the county's famous poet-composer; the Thomas Treherne windows (2007) in

Hereford Cathedral celebrating the life of a local 17C priest and poet; two windows at Tewkesbury Abbey to mark its 900th anniversary; and the Millennium windows at Malvern Priory. Other commissions are found in buildings all over those counties and across the country.

Tom has described his work as follows: *'Most of my windows are in churches, and their themes are scriptural. Several new projects, however, have also been celebrations or commemorations of remarkable people, incorporating their relationship with a particular place and landscape. At Gloucester Cathedral is the Ivor Gurney glass; this composer and poet, a kind of patron saint of mental illness, and speaker of beauty and anguish, had an intense connection with Gloucestershire, the land of his birth. Adjacent to the Gurney glass is now a*



Leicester Cathedral: Richard III window (detail)

Gerald Finzi window, an attempt to make a visual equivalent of the character and themes of his music. At Leicester Cathedral is a pair of windows installed with the re-interment of King Richard III [above]. Here, stories that emerge from an individual life are intended to become stories for all of us: loss, courage, redemption. ...

All of my windows are made with materials and techniques largely the same as those used in 14th century stained glass, with the addition of much acid etching of flashed glass, a technique that developed in the 19th century. This helps, I believe, to incorporate them in their settings; treatment of imagery can be very different, but colour, texture and the intransigence of lead and glass all make connections with what is already there, whether it is other stained glass, or the forms and surfaces of surrounding architecture and artifacts. Stained glass must be interesting and beautiful in its own right, but it must always acknowledge its context.'
(quote from website: www.thomasdenny.co.uk)

Ivor Gurney window, Gloucester Cathedral

