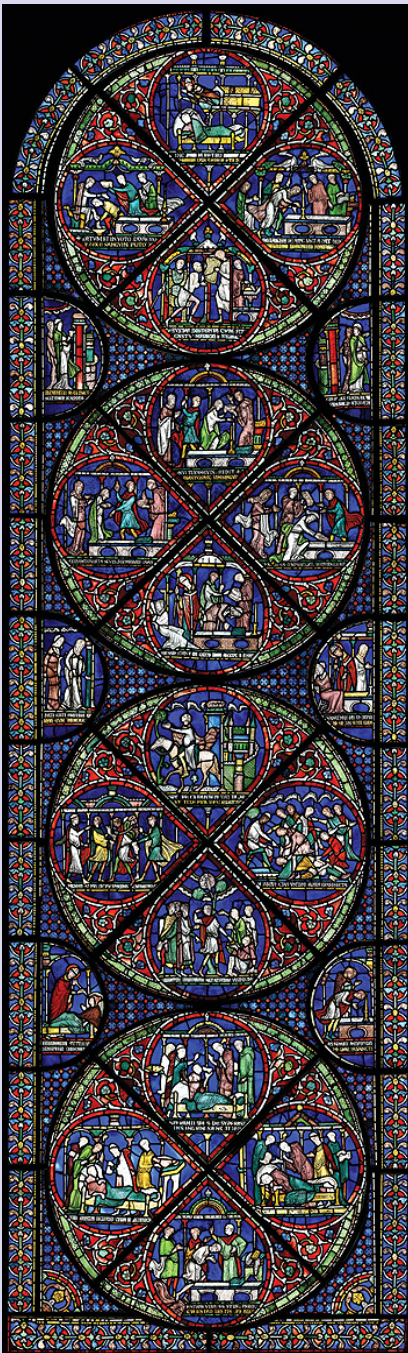


Exhibitions and events

Thomas Beckett exhibition, British Museum, 22 April-22 August

This much-postponed exhibition on the life, death and legacy of Thomas Becket has finally been rescheduled for April. For all members able to travel to the BM, this is an unmissable opportunity to view one of the 7 surviving medieval Miracle windows (nIII; image below) from Canterbury Cathedral close up, as the window will be displayed in four sections arranged side by side at eye level. This is the first time the 6-metre-high window has left the cathedral. The windows retell miracles attributed to Becket in the 3 years after his murder, and are the only known depictions of Becket's miracle stories in any media.



Miracle window nIII, Trinity Chapel ambulatory, Canterbury Cathedral, before rearrangement. All photos ©The Chapter, Canterbury Cathedral



Original sequence of panels in medallions 1 (top) and 3 (second from bottom).

Canterbury Cathedral Studios were involved in its dismantling and preparation; this allowed inspection of individual pieces under a microscope by director Leonie Seliger, who in collaboration with Professor Rachel Koopmans of York University, Toronto, and very much led by her in-depth knowledge of the Becket miracle stories, discovered that some of the window panels had been in the wrong narrative order for more than 350 years ... they were probably mixed up during a hasty restoration in the 17C after vandalism.

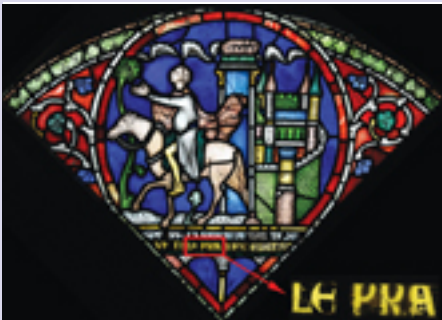
The top sequence (image above centre) shows a man whose leg is cured after washing in the holy water of St Thomas. MA Michael in *Stained Glass of Canterbury Cathedral* thought this sequence best fitted the story of Roger of Valognes, who had injured his foot after forgetting his promise to come to the shrine. However, the top piece appears to be an incongruous image of St Thomas's spirit floating above a sleeping man's bed:



The third sequence down (image above right) has equally puzzling features. MA Michael equates the bottom three panels of the medallion to the cure of Eilward of Westoning, who was brought before a magistrate for failing to pay a debt (left side). He is found guilty and then blinded, castrated, and left for dead (right side). After confessing his sins, his sight is restored and he is told



to thank St Thomas, and so he travels to Canterbury. However, the top piece is at odds with this narrative; it shows a man leaving the city, not entering it, and the text below it includes the word 'leper':

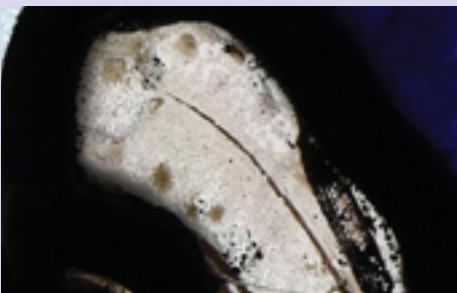


This suggested to the team that the panel belongs to a story about leprosy, not one of castration.

Examining the glass under a microscope, Leonie discovered the vital clue to the puzzle in the left-side piece of the top medallion:



Under high power, the leg of the man being washed with holy water was revealed to be covered in carefully painted leprotic spots:





Corrected sequence of Ralph the leper (left) and Eilward of Westoning (right) stories.

This finding enabled the teams to identify the top medallion as the story of Ralph of Langton (the leper), and the panel with the floating Becket as a vision of him healing the castrated Eilward in a dream. Also, wyvern-shaped figures that seemed random in the horseman panel also became clearly 'harbingers of doom' in the tale of Ralph the Leper, who, after being cured, sinned and was struck down with leprosy once more – so give a moral warning. The team proposed the temporary re-ordering of two panels for the exhibition, with the two top panels interchanged (images above).

This was the second time the Studio team and Rachel Koopmans were able to work together on one of the Miracle Windows. The first time was in 2018, when a grant from the Friends of Canterbury Cathedral enabled them to investigate the First Miracle Window (CVMA no. nV). That research resulted in the rediscovery of medieval glass in that window showing the earliest depiction of pilgrims on the road to Canterbury, and it also allowed the team to date the



window to the 1180s rather than the early 13C (see www.medievalists.net/2018/09/discovery-earliest-known-image-pilgrims-canterbury/). Covid prevented them from carrying out such detailed research on the window going on display, but they still managed to communicate via digital means across the Atlantic, sufficiently to propose the re-ordering and to identify Ralph's story. Once the exhibition is over, they will continue the research in Canterbury before the glass is re-installed.

At the exhibition, the window will be seen in the correct narrative order, and this will be the first time in over 350 years that visitors will be able to view these panels as the makers intended. At present, however, we don't know if the team will be permitted to re-instate the two panels in what they believe is the correct order. This will require applications to several statutory bodies, and they will consider this later this year after they have had the chance to look at some of the inscriptions in more detail together.

'Medieval women: subjects and makers of art' online exhibition by Sam Fogg Gallery until 31 March

This exhibition during Women's History Month includes several late-Medieval panels, and a free accompanying talk by Dr Jana Gajdošová and Dr Alexandra Gajewski on 23 March takes you on a tour of the exhibition in its gallery setting, accompanied by commentary and an in-depth look at select individual works. See the exhibition at: www.samfogg.com/exhibitions/29/. Register for the talk on the London Art Week website: londonartweek.co.uk/medievalwomensubjectsandmakersofart/.



Anton Schiterberg: A wild man and woman with the Strub coat of arms, dated 1556, Switzerland, Lucerne. Courtesy of Sam Fogg, London.

Durham, Barnard Castle, St Mary

13–23 Jul 'Journeys – Teithiau', exhibition with Jonathan Cooke, Catrin Davies, Nicola Kantorowicz, Elizabeth Lamont, Rachel Phillips, Christian Ryan AMGP and Caroline Swash FMGP. Details on websites: www.jonathancookeglasspainter.com/ / www.stmarysbarnardcastle.org.uk.

Ely, Stained Glass Museum

Until 29 May 'Tinker tailor ...', Rachel Mulligan solo exhibition;

12 May–25 Jun 'Journeys – Teithiau', exhibition with Jonathan Cooke and others (see Durham above). Details tel: 01353 660347; email: info@stainedglassmuseum.com; website: thestainedglassmuseum.com/exhibitions.

London, Worshipful Company of Glaziers/Worshipful Company of Chartered Architects

25 Mar 'Artist, art consultant and architect: different perspectives', webinar with Ellen

Mandelbaum, Andrew Moor and Jonathan Louth. Register at: www.eventbrite.co.uk/. Cost £5 + Eventbrite fee. Any queries to the Glaziers' Clerk, Liz Wicksteed; tel: 0207 403 6652; email: Clerk@worshipfulglaziers.com.

Scotland, Northlands Creative, Lybster

20 Mar–4 Apr 'Glass meet the future', film festival.. Tel: 01593 721229; email: info@northlandscreative.co.uk; website: <https://northlandscreative.co.uk/event/glass-meet-the-future-film-festival-2021/>.

Courses and workshops

Berks/Bucks/Oxfordshire, Reading/High Wycombe/Henley/Wantage

Stained glass and glass painting classes with Nicola Kantorowicz FMGP. 29–30 Apr Stained glass workshop at Maidenhead. Details: www.nicolakantorowicz.com; www.adultlearningbcc.ac.uk; www.ardingtonschool.com.

Bristol, Creative Glass Guild

Workshops in stained glass, glass painting, using enamels, fusing, slumping and frit. Email the Guild to be notified when classes resume in the spring. Details tel: 0871 200 3389; email: info@creativeglassguild.co.uk; website: www.creativeglassguild.co.uk.

nr Bristol, Warm Glass UK

Live online masterclasses and personalised tuition days (up to 2 people): spring classes full; summer classes to be announced. Details/booking tel: 01934 863344; website: www.warm-glass.co.uk.