



WIND IN THE WILLOWS

ARTIST: DAVID RUTH

COMPLETION: August 2008

SITE: Willow Glen Library

ADDRESS: 1157 Minnesota Ave.
San José, CA 95125

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 6



Detail of two windows: viewed from inside the Library (left), and from outside (right)

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Wind in the Willows, created by Bay Area artist David Ruth for the new Willow Glen Branch Library, is a group of 54 art glass windows; they vary in size from 6" to 27" square and are installed in an asymmetrical pattern across the west-facing wall of the new Library.

Artist Ruth met with Willow Glen residents at the start of the project. They shared with him their strong affinity for the area's natural features, tree-lined streets, and craftsman-era style homes, their sentiment about the region's the agricultural past and as well as their embrace of a new, modern aesthetic emerging in the neighborhood, and their pride in the Willow Glen community. These ideas helped shape his concept for the artwork.

Ruth's windows are intended to capture the feeling of light as it filters through tree branches, particularly through willow tree branches. The windows are a striking feature viewed from either the interior or exterior, during day or night. During the afternoon they create colorful patterns reminiscent of light through leaves on the inside of the library; in the evening, light from the Library emanates outward through the windows.



A portion of the Library's west wall, with some of the artist's windows

The artist collaborated with the architects and the Library Design Team to integrate these glass elements all along the facility's prominent West wall. Made of a durable borosilicate glass that is able to withstand the dramatic seasonal temperature changes, the artwork is a functional filter for the often intense afternoon sunlight. Each piece of glass is handcrafted and unique, lending an element of discovery to *Wind in the Willows*.

The artwork was created with funding provided through a \$212 million library bond measure approved by voters in November 2000.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

David Ruth is a widely admired and well-established glass sculptor based in the San Francisco Bay Area, Ruth's method begins with a painterly approach that is the foundation of his architectonic, and organic, glass based installations and sculptures. Ruth's work is featured in prominent international and local collections.

David graduated from CCAC in 1987 with is Master of Fine Art. David was the recent recipient of an National Science Foundation - Office of Polar Programs Artist & Writer grant for travel to Antarctica (Palmer Station) where he studied ice textures and forms. David recently completed a research grant in Antarctica. David lives in Oakland, California. More of his work may be seen at www.davidruth.com

ABOUT THE PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

The City of San José Public Art Program seeks to build community identity by initiating artworks and exhibitions that enhance the civic landscape. Through active engagement between the artists and communities, public art projects strive to reflect the City's ethnic diversity, historic richness, and envision its present and future.

The Public Art Program is a program of San José's Office of Cultural Affairs, a division of the City's Office of Economic Development. The Public Art Program was established by a 1984 municipal ordinance and provides 1% for art in City capital improvement projects and eligible private development.

For further information and photos, please contact the San José Public Art Program.

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