



Evergreen Community Charter School
Memorial Window 2012
In Loving Memory of Dillon Corcoran

In 2011 I was commissioned by a local school to create a memorial window for one of the students who passed away. I had known Dillon and had liked him very much so this project became very near and dear to my heart.

This window could be an opportunity to send a message into the future. Over the years, hundreds, maybe thousands of students would see this window. This would be a chance to inspire future generations of children, to create wonder and curiosity. I asked the students and faculty to help me make that statement within this design. The window would show a student sitting cross legged with an open book on his (or is it her) lap. From the pages of the book come swirls of color with text filling the ribbons of blue glass. The text would be symbols and images, quotes and formulas representing many disciplines of learning. The idea was that a child could spend a lot of time looking at the window finding a new detail every time and maybe be inspired to ask a question or look up an answer.

This rough sketch was the starting point.





Once approved by the school, the design needed to be translated into a working drawing from which I could cut the glass, paint the images and construct with lead.

The glass was selected and cut to exact size and shape.

Here the glass is lying on a white table top. It looks great but it will be in sunlight



so.....

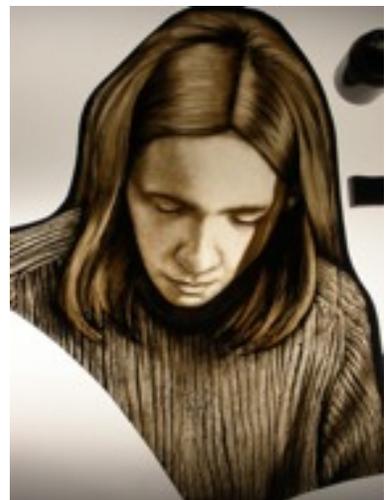
I use a glass easel to check the final effect of actual sunlight through the glass. This is a critical step.

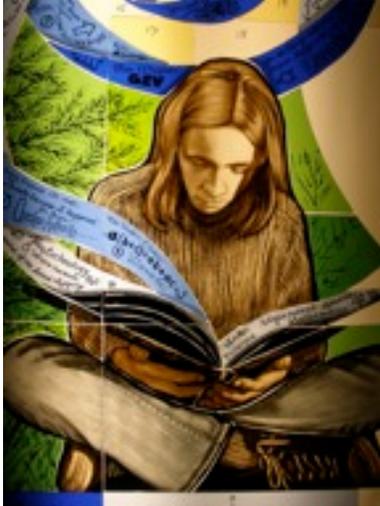


Now the painting could begin.

Each piece of glass was hand painted sometimes using as many as 16 layers and firings.

Glass paint comes as a powder of glass metal oxides and flux. It can be mixed with water, vinegar, various oils, or polypropylene glycol.





Step by step, firing after firing, the paint went on. The glass kiln never quite cooled down some days.

Dillion was a “carrot top” red head so after the figure was painted I used enamel on the reverse side of the glass to achieve the wonderful color of his hair.



When all the nearly 400 pieces of glass were painted the window could be assembled. The pieces are held together with lead and zinc strips. Lead solder is used at every joint. But the window is still fragile at this point.



An important step is puttying. Thick black putty (sometimes called cement) is worked into the seams and fills the tiny gaps. A stiff brush pushes the putty into the crevasses.





After the putty is worked in there is quite an oily mess so whiting is sprinkled on to absorb the excess and polish both the metal and the glass. There is a lot of dust in the air so a respirator is a must.

The putty must cure for a month to to harden and make the window strong and durable.

The day of installation finally arrives. Here is the view before.



A&E Glass in Cresco helped with the install. Panes of tempered glass were installed on both sides of the stained glass for safety.

It was a very exciting moment to see sunlight stream through the panel for the first time.

It is my dearest wish that this window may provide comfort to those who grieve the loss of Dillion, and will help inspire future generations of students and teachers.

Margie Cohen
2012

