

Anne Ryan Miller Crafts Stunning Landscapes in Stained Glass

It was in the 1970s, while studying environmental education and ecology at the University of Michigan, when stained glass artist Anne Ryan Miller first became aware of the dawning need for environmental concern. This knowledge has left an indelible mark on her art.

“Many people are becoming aware that the pristine and beautiful places that we have taken for granted may not be here in upcoming years,” she says.

But rather than focus on the negative aspects of over-construction and the degradation of nature, Ms. Miller chooses to use the ethereal qualities of glass to remind us how mysterious, beautiful and subtle nature can be.

She has developed a unique and personal technique of metal overlays soldered over glass. This technique allows her to capture the haze of Brown County’s hills and the shadows of its woodlands.

“I have lived in Brown County for more than 25 years,” says Ms. Miller. “I was drawn to the amazingly soft, sensual beauty of the area.”

This beauty continues to inspire her landscape and wildlife motifs, which, when created using her metal overlay technique, result in shadowy, misty images with strong silhouettes and enormous depth.

The technique is unusual, and Ms. Miller feels it is important to explain it to those who haven’t seen it in person.



“I start out by going directly to the sheet glass manufacturers,” she says.

She looks closely at each individual piece of glass, choosing only those she finds most interesting, since they become the background, or “canvas,” for the metal overlay work.

Each design is then drawn right onto the glass, and she then hand cuts metal shapes for the overlays.

“I can hand cut very intricate designs,” she says.

Ms. Miller then applies metal to both sides of the stained glass, creating a strong silhouette on the front of the piece, and a misty of distant effect on the back.

“The diffusion of light around the metal creates the effects,” she explains.

To finish a piece, Ms. Miller solders over the metal to build texture and interest on the surface, then patinas the metal with copper, bronze and blue/black tones.

“There is a mystical quality to glass,” she says, one of the reasons she loves to work in the medium.

“You might never tire of a piece of glass hung in natural light,” she says. “It will appear different each time you see it. It will change as the seasons change, constantly offering you a new view.”

To view Ms. Miller’s stained glass in person, visit her glass studio in Nashville. Her studio will be one of the studios participating in the Brown County Studio and Garden Tour, taking place the last weekend of June each year, as well as on the Back Roads Studio Tour each October.

To learn more about Anne Ryan Miller and her work, visit www.AnneRyanMillerGlassStudio.com or www.BrownCountyStudioTour.com

by Michele Heather Pollock