

Wind in the Willows

Artist: David Ruth

August 2008

Willow Glen Branch Library / 1157 Minnesota Ave., San Jose, CA 95125 / Council District 6

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Wind in the Willows, created by Oakland artist David Ruth, is a group of 54 art glass windows that vary in size from 6" to 27" square and are installed in an asymmetrical pattern across the west wall of the library.

The artist met with Willow Glen community members at the start

of the project. They shared with him their strong affinity for the area's natural features, tree-lined streets, Craftsman era homes, their sentiment about the region's the agricultural past, while simultaneously embracing 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 the afternoon they create colorful patterns reminiscent of light through leaves on the inside of the library; while in the evening, light from the library emanates outward through the windows.

The artist collaborated with the architects to integrate these glass elements along the facility's prominent west wall. Made of a durable borosilicate glass, 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*.



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



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



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 architectural and organic glass-based installations and sculptures. Ruth's work is featured in prominent international and local collections.

David Ruth graduated from CCAC with a Master of Fine Arts degree in 1987. Ruth was the recent recipient of a National Science Foundation - Office of Polar Programs Artist & Writer grant for travel to Antarctica (Palmer Station) where he studied ice textures and forms. He lives in Oakland.]

More of his work may be seen at www.davidruth.com

ABOUT THE PUBLIC ART PROJECT

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 community engagement, public art strives to reflect the City's diversity, historic richness, and envision its present and future.

The Public Art Program is part of the City's Office of Cultural Affairs, a division of the Office of Economic Development. The Public Art Program was established by a 1984 municipal ordinance that provides public art through funding from City capital improvement projects and eligible private development.

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