

# EIGHT STAINED-GLASS PANELS (circa. 1980's/90's), Eric Wesselow

This is the first stop on the Public Art, Public Memory tour of Loyola Campus.

As you enter the lobby of the Communications Studies and Journalism building through the main entrance, a colourful installation comes into view: "Eight stained-glass panels" by Eric Wesselow.

The panels — each approximately 5 cm x 30 cm x 30 cm — are mounted in front of the west-facing windows of the lobby. Arranged in two metal floor-to-ceiling frames, they form a series of sculptural glass boxes. In the left frame, four panels glow with warm yellows, oranges and reds, blending into cool tones of blue, green and turquoise. The right frame features cool greys and blues. If you can, take a moment to consider the work. What do you see? What feelings emerge?

Although presented as a single ensemble, each panel was created individually between the 1980s and 1990s. In 2006, the artist's estate donated them to Concordia. They were then integrated into the renovation of the Communications Studies and Journalism building by architects Lapointe Magne et associés, who designed a specialized framing system to highlight Wesselow's distinct approach. Rather than the traditional method of connecting glass with lead, he layered it in patterns and bursts of colour — a method he developed early in his career.

He also explored experimental colour printing, including a process that uses light, mirrors, and glass to shape and reflect each image. These techniques appeared in public art commissions for churches, synagogues, and universities across Ontario and Quebec. Among them was a 1960 commission for Transport Canada of ten light screens, installed at what is now Pierre Elliot Trudeau Airport in Montreal.

Following that commission, Wesselow worked with other collaborators to encourage the federal government to develop the One Per Cent Program for Public Art, which provides funding for the integration of public art in government buildings. Throughout his career, he remained deeply engaged in promoting cultural appreciation and access to the arts much like his friend Marshall McLuhan — one of the pre-eminent media theorists of the 20th century and an important influence on Wesselow's artistic and cultural practice.

Reflecting McLuhan's commitment to sharing intellectual work with the public, Wesselow appeared on CBC Television and CBS in the US and participated as a guest lecturer at McLuhan's Monday Night Seminar series at the University of Toronto's Centre for Culture and Technology.

The placement of "Eight stained-glass panels" in Concordia's Communications Studies and Journalism building honours that connection, paying tribute to McLuhan's influence on the fields of communications, journalism and cultural studies. Perhaps these works also offer a quiet invitation — to maintain our engagement across disciplines, and to continue exploring the intersections of art, culture, and public life.

To continue this tour, click on Three stained-glass windows by an unknown artist.