



Artist: Mary Temple, Photo: Etienne Frossard, Commissioned by NYC SCA in collaboration with DCA Percent for Art Program

Mary Temple's work plays with light and shadow; or more accurately, plays with the appearance of light and shadow. She creates silhouettes that seem to be thrown by nature, their static quality the only indicator that they are not actual manifestations of the interplay between sunlight and trees. When she won the commission to install a piece of public art in the lobby of New York's Middle School 114, Temple wanted to make something that encouraged students to "ask questions and look in unexpected places for solutions."

FEATURED PRODUCT



ARCHITECT

Mitchell Giurgola Architects

ARTIST

Mary Temple

YEAR OF COMPLETION

2010

MS 114 New York, NY

Her vision was to print bands of colors that appear to be interrupted by the shadow of trees, even though there is no window or light source in the lobby that could result in these shadows. “As students of natural science, this piece may be their first inkling that ‘light’ is something that needs investigation,” Temple says. “I hope that then they may look for clues that help them parse out the truth.”

At first, she tried to achieve this effect with ceramic tiles. However, because the firing process changes colors, she couldn't get

Photo: Etienne Frossard MS 114 New York, NY the hues she was looking for. This is where GGI came in. “I realized that glass gave me the opportunity to play with transparency and translucency, and as long as it could be tempered, it would be tough enough for this application,” she explains. “I looked at lots of glass fabricators, but GGI made me feel that they would do whatever it took to get it right.”

As it turned out, it took quite a lot. Spencer Raymond, Project Manager of GGI explains. “We created 20 individual panels of glass, each with two unique colors, with an abrupt change between the colors,” he notes. “We were using a spot color process so we had to create blended color palettes to achieve two tones of light and dark. Because all the layers of color are linked, if you pushed on one, it pushed on everything else.” In addition, because the shadow pattern extends across all panels to create a unified image of 370 inches by 108 inches, the joints between panels had to be perfect. As Raymond points out, “being a glass fabricator wasn't enough, we had to create palettes with the artist that would satisfy her creative vision. Both GGI and Temple admit that this artwork pushed the boundaries of what's possible to print on glass. “The thing that impressed me about GGI is that they were willing to work with me, as an artist. They kept going back to the drawing board to help me get the right feel and achieve what I wanted.” This willingness to keep at it may be another lesson that students at MS 114 can take away from this stunning interplay of color and light, shadow and suggestion, ink and glass.



Photo: Etienne Frossard