

BUTTERFLY EFFECT

A MASTER CRAFTSMAN BEGETS AN ARTISTIC LEGACY

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Bryant Stanton's artistic calling revealed itself during a serendipitous walk off campus, when the then 19-year-old—who was studying 3-D studio art at Texas Tech University—ran into a local stained glass artist. “I was instantly drawn to the shop, and to the smell of linseed oil and turpentine,” recalls Stanton, who crafted a simple stained glass butterfly on the spot. “By the time I got back to class, I was hooked.”

Today, Stanton Glass Studio can look back on nearly 30 years of large-scale, custom glass commissions for both corporate and residential clients from its Waco locale. There, Stanton has created a mini crafts village on 20 acres that includes a cabinet shop for his son Nathan, 24; a glassblowing studio for son Jordan, 19; and a two-story studio for Stanton's own workshop. The setup is a continuation of a family legacy. “I was raised around creative people myself,” says Stanton. “They were definitely an influence.”

The artist and his sons now work together on projects that range from stained glass windows for residential and commercial use and huge glass domes for luxurious homes across the country, to the remodel of Austin's historic Driskill Hotel—the work included etched glass shower doors, transoms, a piano top and a huge dome in the lobby that looks as if it's been there since the hotel opened its doors in 1886.”

It's these large-scale projects that Stanton loves best. The most recent is a three-story representation of the double helix DNA molecule, made of the same space-age dicrylic glass used for the Hubble telescope; it will eventually hang in the science wing of McLennan Community College in Waco. Other favorites include a 14-foot-diameter dome for the entry of a 22,000-square-foot home in Fort Smith, Arkansas, and 20-by-20-foot light fixtures for Houston-based Vic and Anthony's Steakhouse that hang in the eatery's Las Vegas outpost.

But Stanton's smallest-scale work, the original stained glass butterfly, hangs in his office—a symbol of the artistic spark that served as the catalyst for a laudable career. “People hire us to be creative, and because they want something different,” says Stanton. “If that's what they're looking for, this is where they come.”

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